Song Dynasty
Gupta Empire
~320-~550
Sui Dynasty (581-617)
Tang Dynasty
~618-~907
Song Dynasty
~960-~1279
Five Dynasties Period
Rise – Song – ~960-~1279

• 50 years of division and warfare after fall of Tang
• called the Five Dynasties, after the main states that handed power down through five decades.
Rise - Song

- Many other minor kingdoms rose and fell during this time, as well.
- Power was held by whoever could muster adequate force to seize it.
- Society and the economy were subject to severe stress and disruption.
Rise - Song

• Zhao brothers seized power in one of the Five Dynasties
  – Kuangyin
  – Kuangyi,

• basic problem = how to ensure that some other general would not do to them what they had done to their emperor?
Song

- reunified China through a series of military campaigns
- by 970, controlled the entire empire.
Rise - Song

• Zhao brothers solved their problem with innovative policies and careful political maneuvering.

• Old aristocratic order = largely been destroyed in the chaos of the fall of the Tang and 50 years of chronic warfare.
Zhao brothers used a new method to recruit men of talent to serve in their administration, the Confucian examination system.
Rise - Song

• Song Dynasty
  – Northern Song
    960–1127
  – Southern Song
    1127–1279
  • Southern Song = period after the Song lost control of northern China to the Jin Dynasty.
Rise - Song

- a "Chinese Renaissance"
  - progress in technology and inventions,
  - the upcoming of new philosophical interpretations of the old texts meant a renewal of the old
  - revival of old Confucian traditions after the Tang age of Buddhism, “Neo-confucianism”
  - Huge importance of the Shi
Similarities

1. Leaders use military force to eliminate rivals

2. Economic problems lay groundwork for new power

3. Leaders establish new rule supported by old definition of legitimacy – restoration of old values, territories, traditions, etc.

4. Started stable, long-lasting stable empires with prosperous periods
Achievements - Song

• first government in world history to issue banknotes or paper money,
• first Chinese government to establish a permanent standing navy.
• first known use of gunpowder,
• first discernment of true north using a compass.
Achievements - Song

• estimated that the Northern Song had a population of some 100 million people
  – economic revolution in pre-modern China.
  – gradual withdrawal of the central government from heavily regulating the market economy.
  – increased the importance of the lower gentry's role in grassroots administration and local affairs.

• Appointed officials in county and provincial centers relied upon the *Shi* (Scholar Gentry) for their services, sponsorship, and local supervision.
Achievements - Song

• Philosophers Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi
  – reinvigorated Confucianism
  – infused with Buddhist ideals
  – emphasized a new organization of classic texts that brought out the core doctrine of Neo-Confucianism.

• Although civil service examinations had existed since the Sui Dynasty, it became much more prominent in the Song period.
  – factor in the shift of an aristocratic elite to a bureaucratic elite.
Role of Beliefs - Song

Neo-confucianism
Fall - Song

- Invasion of Mongols
- Institution of Yuan (Mongol) Dynasty
Fall of the Song

- Political corruption
- Invasions from external tribes
- Civilian uprisings greatly weakened the Northern Song Dynasty.

- Weak military strength - Northern Song were not able to withstand the invasion from the Jin Dynasty.
  - 1127 the Jin army captured the Northern Song capital of Kaifeng,
  - Ending Northern Song Dynasty.
Fall of the Song

- Southern Song Dynasty joined the Mongolian Kingdom to overthrow the Jin
- Mongolians attempted to expand into the Song territory several times
- After seeking peace with the Mongolians, Song Dynasty finally conquered
Fall of the Song

- Kublai Khan
- 1271 Kublai Khan established Yuan Dynasty
  - (1271 – 1368)

- 1276 massive attack on Southern Song
  - capture of the Song's capital, Lin'an,
  - downfall of Southern Song Dynasty.