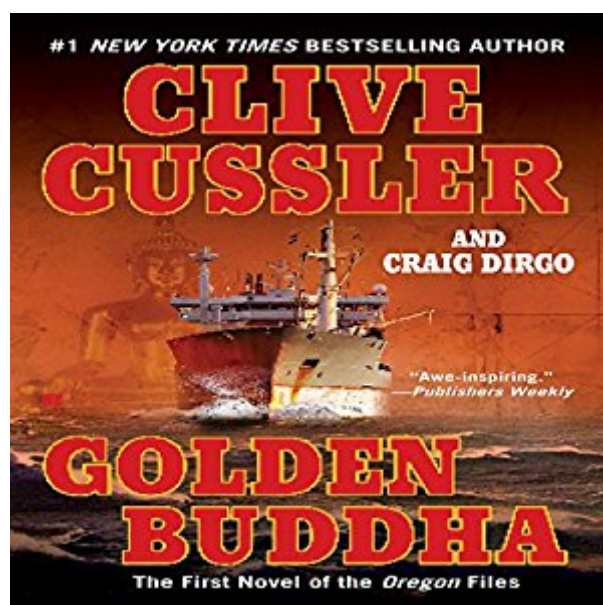


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# Golden Buddha



## Synopsis

Juan Cabrillo's first adventure with the Oregon - a state-of-the-art spy ship disguised as a nondescript lumber hauler - takes him and his crew into dangerous waters as they try to put Tibet back in the hands of the Dalai Lama by striking a deal with the Russians and the Chinese. Cabrillo's gambling chip is a golden Buddha containing records of vast oil reserves in the disputed land. But first he'll have to locate - and steal - the all-important artifact. And there are certain people who would do anything in their power to see him fail....

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There comes a time when authors "jump the shark." Tom Clancy's was when he began "writing" the Net Force series (which I fondly call Net Farce); John Grisham did it with The King Of Torts; Kathy Reichs latest, Bare Bones, comes close (her rant at the end is out of character for the main character, Tempe Brennan). For Clive Cussler, it's Golden Buddha. Although his name is prominent on the cover, this latest book is co-written with Craig Dirgo, who's written with Cussler before on The Sea Hunters books. In those, you can obviously tell which parts Cussler wrote and which Dirgo wrote - Dirgo's parts did not flow as well and sometimes contained inaccuracies in the facts. He should take a writing class. Golden Buddha is a new series called The Oregon Files, featuring a main character named Juan Cabrillo who is tall, blonde and blue-eyed (much like Kurt Austin in the other spinoff series by Cussler and Paul Kemprecos). He and his crew of the ship Oregon take on "jobs" that most mercenaries wouldn't touch. They all showed up in a previous Dirk Pitt novel, Flood

Tide, and I guess Cussler thought it would be a good spinoff. It could've been, but it isn't. First of all, the book is about putting the Dalai Lama back in power in Tibet, which is why a very large golden Buddha must be recovered - there is a secret compartment in it with important information. I wish the Dalai Lama character hadn't been based on a real person - this made the entire story very unrealistic (if it does come true by 2005, the date in the book, I'll eat my hat). A fictional religious leader would have been a better bet. Also, Russian President Putin is named, but the President of the USA is not - he's just called the President. Who says Putin will still be in power in 2005?

As far as I can tell, I've read every novel that Clive Cussler has written. These include: THE MEDITERRANEAN CAPER, ICEBERG, RAISE THE TITANIC!, VIXEN 03, NIGHT PROBE, PACIFIC VORTEX, DEEP SIX, CYCLOPS, TREASURE, DRAGON, SAHARA, INCA GOLD, SHOCK WAVE, FLOOD TIDE, ATLANTIS FOUND and VALHALLA RISING. I have also read, three novels he wrote with Paul Kemprecos which include: SERPENT, BLUE GOLD, AND FIRE ICE. His most recent novels (particularly the ones he coauthored) fail to meet the richness found in his earlier work. In a long process of excruciating reflection, I have drawn three conclusions regarding GOLDEN BUDDHA (coauthored with Craig Dirgo) that focus on changes in my personal enjoyment of Cussler's recent collaborative writing. First is intensive character development. Within Cussler's Dirk Pitt series, I gained a great deal of reading enjoyment by viewing the character development. He was able to offer his readers an intensive psychological profile of the main and secondary characters. This process made the characters come alive by having an in depth understanding of their individual and often conflicting motivations. In addition, Cussler was able to move the characters through their aging cycles and thereby produced changes within their psychological profiles. I don't see this intensive character development in GOLDEN BUDDHA or in the other novels Cussler has coauthored. I miss that aspect of this writing. Throughout the Dirk Pitt series, the impossible seemed possible. Cussler was able to pull together a series of strange and twisted elements within a story. These plot twists and turns emerged from the character's thought processes, dialog, and the reader's knowledge of history and archeology. Within GOLDEN BUDDHA, the characters do very little thinking.

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