A COUNTRY MADE BY WAR
By Tony Hillerman
Random House, 629 pp., $22.50

By DAVID P. HAMILTON

T HE TRUTH THAT a nation is a product of its history has never been more evident than in the "American" West. Geoffrey Perret, whose latest book, "A Country Made By War," is due for publication this month by Random House, has written a book that is in the tradition of such works as David McCullough's "John Adams" and David Halberstam's "The Gainesville Incident." Perret's book is not about a single person or event, but rather the cumulative effect of events and people that have shaped the American West.

Perret begins with the first Americans, the Native Americans, and their stories. He spins tales against a backdrop of the culture and history of the region, from the first contacts with the Spanish to the advent of the Industrial Revolution. He describes the struggles of the Native Americans, the effects of European colonization, and the ongoing conflict between the two cultures.

Perret then moves on to the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction era. He describes the impact of these events on the region, from the loss of land and resources to the displacement of Native Americans. He also examines the role of the Union and Confederate armies in shaping the region, and how their presence continues to shape the landscape today.

Perret's book is a rich tapestry of history, culture, and human experience. It is a story of struggle and resilience, of loss and renewal. It is a story of the American West, and the people who have shaped it.

A Thief of Time

Mark Morris gives witty, sensual dance interpretation of Purcell opera

DIDO AND AEneas

Opera by Henry Purcell. Directed by Mark Morris. This show was part of the Boston Early Music Festival. At The Majestic Theatre, June 6-10. Presented by Dance Umbrellas.

By MARK ROBERTS

TWO WEEKS AGO, MARK MORRIS and his troupe of dancers, now based at the Montclair Theatre in Brussels, performed "Dido and Aeneas" at the American performances of Dido and Aeneas. Poor America — and lucky Boston — to have an artist of such rare gifts perform there at all. Only at the moment would sometimes mingle with the tragedy.

Innocent, Mark Morris's choreography, draws on the myth of Dido, Queen of Carthage, who fell for Aeneas, a young Roman warrior. Their love blossomed into an intense, passionate relationship, only to be cut short by the arrival of a third character, an evil counterpart, the sorcerer Hecuba, who sent the lovers apart.

Morriss himself is a virtuoso performer, both in his technical mastery and in his exquisite sense of stage. His Dido was so crooked drag queen, but a grand diva, in awe of her own tragedy, her sensual beauty, and the power of the music. Aeneas, played by Guillermo Resto, was a paragon of classical male beauty, his voice arsen, as was the music, which ranged from light-hearted, energetic fanfares to highly dramatic, lush, and later of submarine-launched weapons. Such a posture not only reduces the threat of accidental war due to misinterpreta- tion of intelligence, but its less threatening to the Soviets and helps keep tricky fingers off the nuclear trigger.

TALKING GOD

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