Mobility has always been a key factor for victory in any era. Whether battles are fought in orderly fashion or in guerrilla warfare, it is often the fact that the best logistical organisation that will be victorious. Contemporary and modern periods respectively offer many examples such as World War II and the Thirty Years War. On the other hand, few studies have been made on the question during the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance or the Modern age. The Italian wars of Francis I gave the opportunity to observe the passage from the model of chivalrous warfare of the Middle Ages to the firearms and cannons which would characterize the modern period. What is interesting in this conflict is the appearance, during its second phase, of simultaneous fronts on two distant territories that are Picardy and Champagne in the north and Navarre and Italy in the south. France had to face alone several enemies who surrounded it: Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, Italy except Genoa and Venice and finally England. The study of this war led by François Ier is divided into two distinct phases that can be delimited chronologically. From 1513 to 1520 we witness the French domination with the victory of Marignan and the reconquest of the Duchy of Milan. From 1520 to 1525, the defeat of François I in the race for the election to the throne of the Holy Empire against Charles V triggered the second phase of the war, which was characterized by the opening of several simultaneous fronts, opening up a real game of chess that would end in the defeat of Pavia. The study through the prism of the first two books of the Memoirs (period 1515-1525) of Martin Bellay, officer of the royal army of François Ier during this war, allows to understand well the stakes of the mobility. Martin du Bellay, actor and observer of this conflict, traveled a lot during this war. He was indeed present in Marignan and Picardy and as such his testimonies are essential in the approach to the problem of mobility.

Materials and Methods

Although the link between War and Mobility seems to be obvious, studies and books on the subject in modern times are rare. Considering that the Italian wars are one of the most studied subjects of modern history, this observation may seem surprising but corresponds to a reality. At no time was it given to me to find a book or an article dealing with this subject. Of course, this concept is mentioned in a number of papers but has not been taken up in a comprehensive study. The definition of the term mobility should be examined. We think of the ability to move from point A to point B. But mobility requires first of all the organization of a movement, the management of many people, coherence within a moving army, the conduct of troops on the battlefield in real time. It should be noted that the concept of journey is only partially taken into account here. Little attention will be paid to landscape description or narration of events occurring on the traveler’s route. These elements that serve as analysis are rare. Of course, the mobility of the army is perceived by the men of that time, one must be attentive to the writings relating to the movements leading to the battle. This is an army moving from front to front. So mobility is not described in detail. We have therefore extended our research to other books and authors to analyse in detail what mobility covers, how it is organized. We found out that it was clear that mobility is inherent in the military condition. It is then necessary to decode the written text and the facts, to observe the European area in a global way in order to see the list of the displacements. To grasp the words belonging to the lexical field of mobility in order to better approach the perception that a man of arms such as Du Bellay may have of this question. The form of writing necessarily influences the way of apprehending events. To really understand mobility and how it is perceived by the men of that time, one must be attentive to the writings relating to the movements leading from city to city between battles but also when a clash takes place.

Discussion

The notion of mobility was a novelty for people like Martin Du Bellay, it was their everyday life. Going to the home for the major part of the year is an everyday action. It might look like an evidence, that it was one gives us an insight on the perception of life by those soldiers, their preoccupations, how they did adapt to special circumstances and their evolution in a time which is located on a turning point chronologically speaking, bringing in the particularities that will characterize the modern period. That work of understanding comes in the way of this phase of Gal’s work with project called Marches/Alps. Which was a physical reproduction of Francis I’s armies crossing the Alps with the same equipments as the soldiers of Martin Du Bellay times. And on a larger point of view the notion of movements and perception of renaissance armies. What is interesting to point out for further research is the relation between armies and civilians of the territories which the armed forces are going by. Because despite the common belief that every army during that period was robbing people of their goods, they needed the local people to advance with safety on those territories with guides and a constant food chain to keep the army in shape and discipline.