

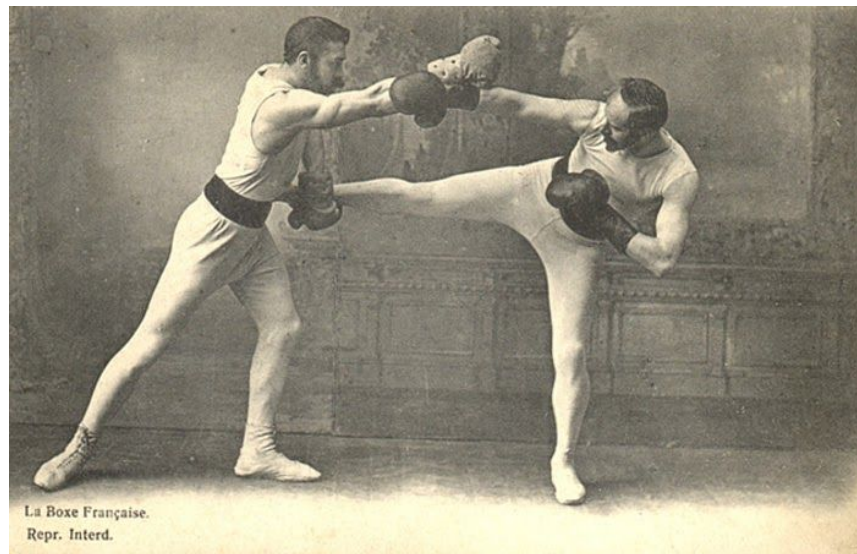
Robert Williams

Professor Facer

FR101 F2019

10/16/2019

Artifact 7



Savate: La Boxe Française

Founded in 1838 by Charles Lecour, Savate is the official martial art of France. It is similar to English boxing, but rather than focusing solely on the fists, it focuses heavily on kicking as well. Savateurs are taught to wear shoes in training as they are considered the fighters' main weapons. While boxers fight at very close range and are forced to strike and block at intense speed, savateurs are able to fight at a longer distance, giving them more time and room to deliver a powerful attack. In Savate, kicks to the head, body, and legs are allowed. Kicks to the back are allowed, but punches to the back are not allowed due to old rules adopted by Lecour. Kicking in savate includes jumping, sweeping, spinning and feints. There are four types of

punches (hook, jab, uppercut, and cross) and kicks (roundhouse, reverse, low shin, and side) that can be added together into effective combinations. You can tell a savateur's rank by the color of their glove. The ranks start at blue glove (or first degree) to silver glove-third degree (or eighth degree). At the rank of red glove (third degree), with the permission of their instructors, savateurs are allowed to compete in the ring. The sport was more popular in the 19th and pre-WWII 20th centuries. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica's article on Savate, this martial art shares similarities with Muay Thai of Thailand and Khmer kickboxing of Cambodia. They quote, "Savate may owe its origin to those sports, as France historically had a large presence in Southeast Asia (most notably during the existence of French Indochina) and there was a good deal of cultural exchange between the countries in the region."

My impression of Savate is that it seems effective but difficult. I used to train in taekwondo, a martial art of Korea, when I was around the ages of 9-12. Taekwondo also involves kicking with jumps and spins that I never got the hang of. As I am not especially athletic, I have always felt more natural with blocks and punches than with kicks. Currently I am learning Wing Chun Kung Fu, which is a Chinese fighting system that seems to focus more on strikes and blocks, although there are some kicks which are relatively easy to execute. I feel like savate would be a great option for someone who prefers martial arts that are more leg-focused.

Links

<https://blackbeltmag.com/arts/western-european-arts/savate-from-the-back-alleys-of-france-to-the-martial-arts-world>

<https://www.britannica.com/sports/savate>