

Mathematics 3810H – Ancient and classical mathematics

TRENT UNIVERSITY, Fall 2011

Assignment #6

Due on Wednesday, 7 December, 2011.

**The Ancient and Classical Mathematical
Theory of Big Game Hunting**

Read *A Contribution to the Mathematical Theory of Big Game Hunting* by H. Pétard [1], which can be found in various formats on the internet. This seminal paper spawned a non-trivial genre of mathematical humour as others contributed additional mathematical techniques for solving the problem of catching lions in the Sahara Desert.

1. Devise additional – original! – mathematical methods for catching lions in the Sahara Desert that use techniques available in ancient and classical times. [10]

REFERENCES

1. *A Contribution to the Mathematical Theory of Big Game Hunting*, H. Pétard, *The American Mathematical Monthly* **45**, 1938, pp. 446-447.

NOTE: “H. Pétard” seems to have been a pseudonym of the American mathematician Ralph P. Boas and some colleagues of his. A scan of the original (pdf) can be found, among other places, at: math.ucdenver.edu/~wcherowi/mathmajor/archive/catchlion.pdf