

## HARŞENA CASTLE

Amasya Castle is at the top of Harşena Mountain which completely covers the northern part of the city. The castle is also known as “Harşena Castle”. The rock on which Amasya Castle is built is 700 meters above sea level and 300 meters above Yeşilırmak River. According to some historians, the castle is built by the Pontus King Mithridates.



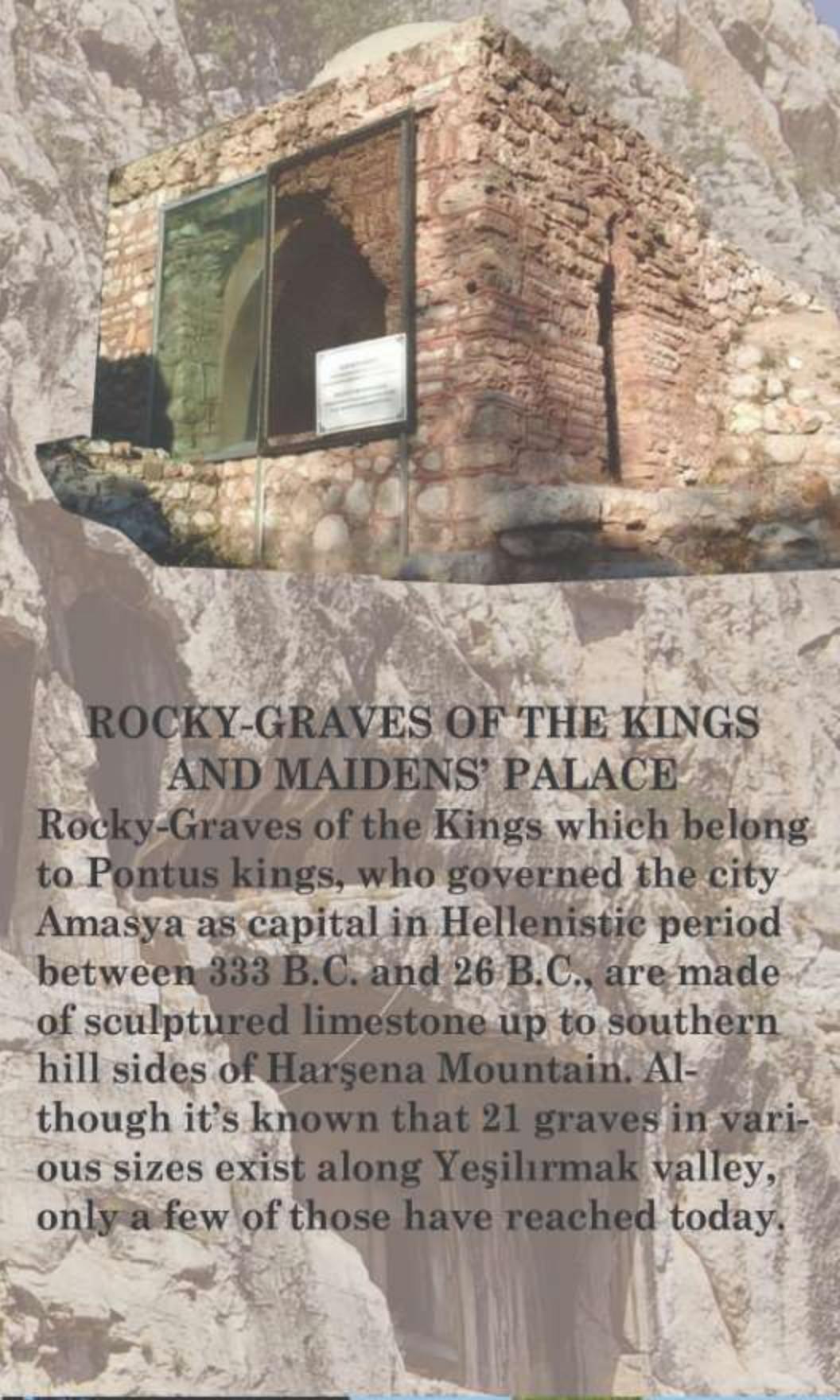
The castle which has been attacked many times in the eras of Persian, Roman, Pontus and Byzantium hegemonies, has been rebuilt after each attack.

The castle has undergone significant

restorations after Turks conquered Amasya in 1075. Amasya Castle has been in use since the 18th century but after that century it began to lose its military importance. The vertex of the castle is made of hewn stone and the walls of it

are made of debris stones. It has 8 defending stages up to Yeşilırmak coast. In the castle there is a corridor called “Cilanbolu” which has an 8 meter dia and climbs down with 150 stairs from the heart of the castle. In the castle, cisterns, water depots and ruins of Turkish baths from the Ottoman era exist.

However another group of historians say that the castle took the name “Harşena” because it has been built by the Commander Karsan or Harsana. Amasya Castle has passed through several hands during historical struggles and suffered damages.



## ROCKY-GRAVES OF THE KINGS AND MAIDENS' PALACE

Rocky-Graves of the Kings which belong to Pontus kings, who governed the city Amasya as capital in Hellenistic period between 333 B.C. and 26 B.C., are made of sculptured limestone up to southern hill sides of Harşena Mountain. Although it's known that 21 graves in various sizes exist along Yeşilırmak valley, only a few of those have reached today.

The gates which have been caved in back-part of the castle are really interesting. Beside one of the major graves in this region, the starting point of a tunnel which is believed that it reaches the river exists. These graves which have been carved into lime stones are in a dominant position of the city.

Rocky-Graves of the Kings have been used as jail and punishment places as well in various periods of time. For instance, Mithridates VI has imprisoned the Roman ambassadors who raised difficulties to him at peace negotiations, to the graves those stand over the railway.

The triad King-Graves those stand over the "Maidens' Palace" have been caved very close to each other. The one on the left has been surpassed to outshine the one in the middle. Melik Ahmed Danişmend Gazi, who conquered Amasya in 1075, had removed the treasures buried in the graves in Pontus era. It is also known that in that era, those caves were places where the Christian monks had made a retreat.

Baths of the Maidens' Palace are parts of a palace which is built in the 14th century. Those baths had been in use till the 19th century by being restoraged many times.



## HARŞENA CASTLE & ROCKY-GRAVES OF THE KINGS AND MAIDENS' PALACE

