



M. Gazi Yaşargil (1925–2025): A Life of Devotion and a Living Lineage

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■ INTRODUCTION

There are surgeons who master a craft, and there are surgeons who reorganise the boundaries of that craft itself. To write of Professor M. Gazi Yaşargil is to write about the latter, an exceedingly rare surgeon who, more than any other of his century, defined what neurosurgery is.

Professor Yaşargil passed on 10 June 2025, at the age of ninety-nine, only weeks before witnessing a whole century that was devoted to the neurosurgery. The journal *Neurosurgery*, of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, named him in 1999 the “*Man of the Century (1950–1999)*”, an honored recognition which was conferred on account of numerous achievements that reshaped our understanding of what neurosurgery can be.

His contributions are architectural rather than incremental to the field. Although the task of enumerating his achievements is hardly possible in a single page, a small glimpse might be possible. With the operative microscope, he altered the scale at which neurosurgical thought becomes possible. Through microneurosurgical techniques, he reframed how neural tissue can be handled. His cerebrovascular work, including microsurgical aneurysm clipping, the first extracranial–intracranial bypass, the approach to arteriovenous malformations, redefined what had been thought inoperable. Prof. Gazi Yaşargil taught that the brain itself, by utilizing the principle of natural corridors, offers the least harmful route to any deep-seated disease. The instruments bearing his name now sit on every microneurosurgical tray in the world.

The neurosurgeons gathered here are not admirers. They are the participants of a living lineage, the colleagues, pupils and visitors who firsthand experienced how microsurgery became the global standard of operative care. Their judgments, gestures, and unwritten culture of mentorship are the substance most at risk of disappearing once the generation that knew him directly is itself gone. The present issue offers a glimpse of this universal inheritance.

The school he founded did not close with his passing. The discipline he taught is now ours to keep, to transmit, and to deserve.

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