

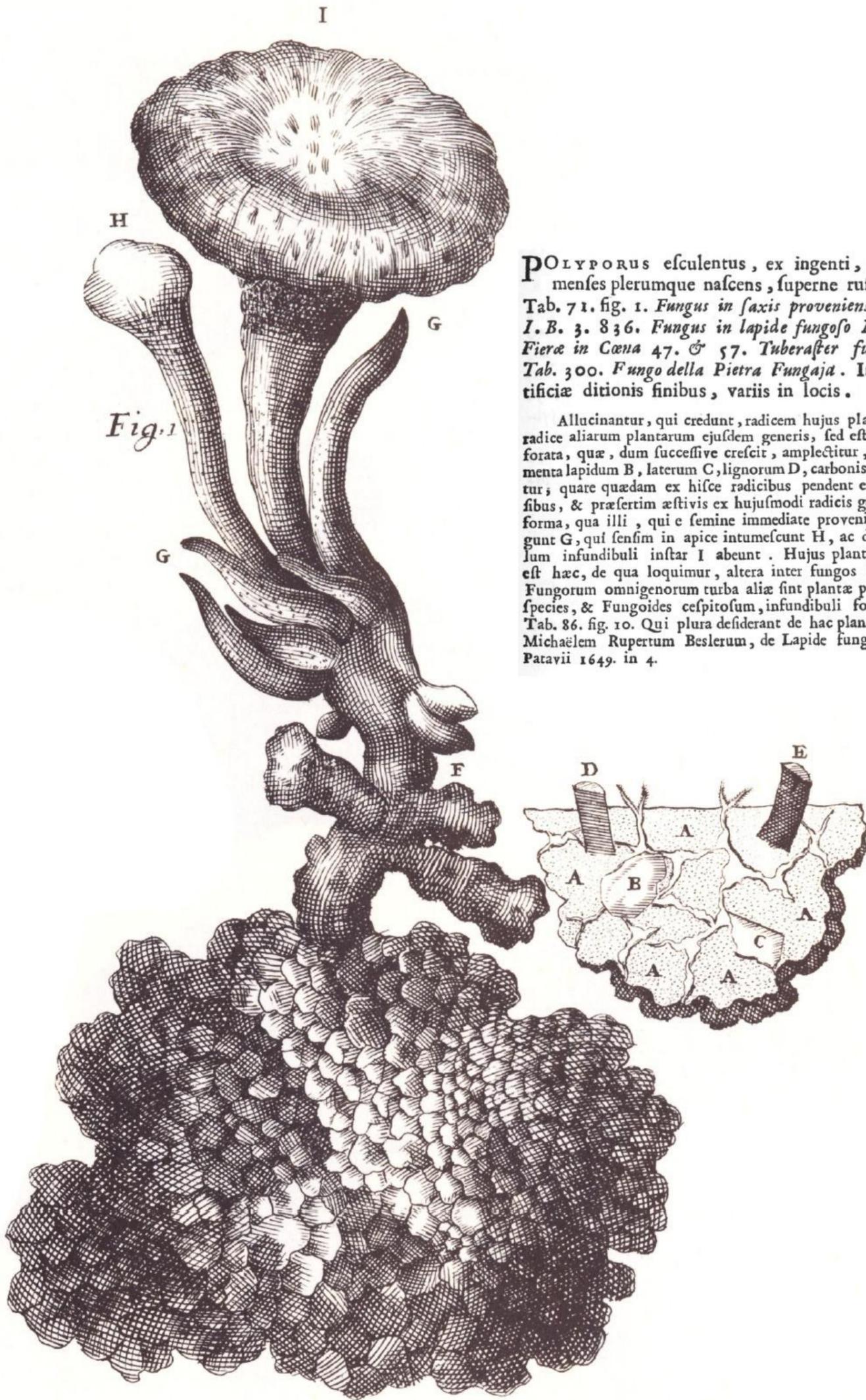
# *Polyporus tuberaster*

from

Pier Antonio Micheli's *Nova plantarum genera*, 1729

The illustration is on plate 71 and I have put Micheli's text about the fungus alongside.

In the first paragraph Micheli briefly describes the fungus (noting that it grows from a large, persistent, tuberous root), cites some earlier writers and finishes by saying it is found in various places in Naples and the Papal domains. Much of the second paragraph is given over to explaining the two illustrations. The smaller illustration, with the letters A to E, shows a cross-section of part of a pseudosclerotium. Micheli writes that those who believe the root of this plant to be a true stone are deluded. Micheli's word is *allucinantur*, related to the English word hallucinate. He goes on to say that the root is similar to the roots of other plants of this genus, though larger, perennial and sponge-like. As it grows it envelops and tightly binds soil A as well as fragments of stone B, tile C, wood D, charcoal E and whatever else might be present. Each month, particularly in summer, fungi develop from the bud F. The letters G to I show successive stages in the development of the polypore fruiting bodies.



**P**OLYPORUS esculentus, ex ingenti, perenni, & tuberosa radice in singulos menses plerumque nascens, superne rufescens, inferne simul cum pediculo albus Tab. 71. fig. 1. Fungus in saxi proveniens C. B. Pin. 372. Fungus supra lapides I. B. 3. 836. Fungus in lapide fungoso Neapoli Casalp. 618. Fungus Lyncurius Fieræ in Cœna 47. & 57. Tuberafter fungos ferens Bocc. Mus. Part. 1. 293. Tab. 300. Fungo della Pietra Fungaja. In Neapolitano Regno, necnon in Pontificiæ ditionis finibus, variis in locis.

Allucinantur, qui credunt, radicem hujus plantæ esse genuinum lapidem; nam nil differt a radice aliarum plantarum ejusdem generis, sed est ampla, perennis, & instar spongiæ, valde perforata, quæ, dum successive crescit, amplectitur, ac tenaciter implicat præter terram A, fragmenta lapidum B, laterum C, lignorum D, carbonis E, & quæcumque in ipsa terra sparsa reperiuntur; quare quædam ex hisce radicibus pendent etiam libras circiter centum. Singulis vero mensibus, & præsertim æstivis ex hujusmodi radicis germine F, producantur Fungi initio non eadem forma, qua illi, qui e femine immediate proveniunt, sed primum instar Vitulini cornu emergunt G, qui sensim in apice intumescunt H, ac deinde in eodem apice laxantur, & in pileolum infundibuli instar I abeunt. Hujus plantæ duas tantum novimus species, quarum altera est hæc, de qua loquimur, altera inter fungos lamellatos reperitur. Nolque latet, utrum in Fungorum omnigenorum turba aliæ sint plantæ perennanti radice, præter has, & quasdam Agarici species, & Fungoides cespitosum, infundibuli forma, fulvum, radice nigra, tuberosa, perenni Tab. 86. fig. 10. Qui plura desiderant de hac planta, adeant epistolam Marci Aurelii Severini ad Michaëlem Rupertum Beslerum, de Lapide fungifero, editam post Cœnam Jo: Baptistiæ Fieræ Patavii 1649. in 4.