

# Procopius, De aed. I i 46

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δοκεῖ δὲ οὐκ ἐπὶ στερεῶς τῆς οἰκοδομίας [διὰ τὸ παρειμένον τῆς οἰκοδομίας] εἶσθαι, ἀλλὰ τῇ σφαίρᾳ τῇ χρυσῇ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐξημμένη καλύπτειν τὸν χῶρον.

σφαίρα scripsi] σειρᾶ codd., cf. Zonar. III 282, 25.

So the Teubner text and apparatus of Haury.<sup>1)</sup>

Haury appears not to have published his reason for rejecting the MSS reading. His reference to Zonaras<sup>2)</sup> does not help, since it merely shows that the dome of St. Sophia might be called a *σφαῖρα* in the time of Zonaras, but LS have no evidence for this meaning in the period they cover (to 600 A.D.), and Procopius is referring in this section to what he describes in the preceding section as *ἐπανεστηκυῖά τις σφαιροειδὴς θόλος*.

On the other hand, I have shown in a recent article<sup>3)</sup> that the word *σειρά* was current in Greek from the time of Homer at least until the century after Justinian. It was especially well known in Homer's famous image of the *σειρὴ χρυσεή*.<sup>4)</sup> It is this image that Procopius has in mind in his extravagant eulogy of the dome of Justinian's great building, which does not rest heavily on its foundations, but appears to float suspended by the Golden Chain. Thus the building is represented as unique and the Emperor is connected with Homer.

We should retain the MSS reading *σειρᾶ* and translate: But it (the dome) seems not to rest upon a solid structure, but to cover the ground suspended from heaven by the Golden Chain.

<sup>1)</sup> Editio stereotypa correctior, addenda et corrigenda adiecit G. Wirth, 1964.

<sup>2)</sup> Zonaras writes: *συνέβη πεσεῖν ἐκ σεισμοῦ τὴν πρὸς ἀνατολὴν μεγάλην σφαῖραν τοῦ τοιούτου ναοῦ*.

<sup>3)</sup> *Glotta* L 1972, 24–28.

<sup>4)</sup> *Iliad* viii 19. See now P. Lévêque, *Aurea Catena Homeri. Une étude sur l'allégorie grecque*. Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1959. To the passages collected there may be added Fulgentius *Myth.* i. 3, 19.1–7 Helm.