were "written in the Assyrian script, on parchment, and in ink."[30] Codices, by then closely associated with Christian scripture (Nongbri 2018, 21–46), were an explicitly *inappropriate* textual vehicle for the law. By the sixteenth century, we find in the *Shulkhan Arukh* the requirement to state out loud before beginning to transcribe a scroll of the law, "I have the intent to write the holy name." This indicates for Marianne Schleicher (2010, 15) that "every Jew writing a scroll had to remind himself of its numinosity and thereby contribute to the maintenance of the status of the Torah as a holy artifact." The connections with the treatment of presencing media does not end there, according to Schleicher:

> Once written, inspected, accepted, and used for ritual purposes, the Torah had to be chanted aloud using a special melody (*bTalmud*, 'Megillah' 32a). These artifactual prescriptions for the preparation and transmission of the physical text provided and continue to provide tools within the Rabbinic tradition for projecting a status of holy *axis mundi* onto the Torah scroll.… In line with this conception, the Torah is even referred to as God's temple (*mikdashyah*) in medieval writings.

The widespread use of Torah arks, which use dates back to the second or third century CE, attests to the special status of the scrolls of the law (Watts 2017, 77–80).

Disposal of texts bearing the divine name required special care, as well. If the divine name cannot be erased, then it also cannot be simply thrown in the trash. The Talmudic text Shabb. 115a states that in the case of a fire, all parts of the Hebrew Bible are to be saved, as well as the *tefillin* (phylacteries) and the *mezuzot*. Other texts and fragments bearing the divine name (or eighty-five coherent letters from the law) were known as *shemot* ("names"), and they, too, were required to be reverently disposed of. The method of disposal that became normative was storage in a *genizah* ("storing"), which was a special storeroom in a synagogue or a designated area in a cemetery where worn-out scrolls of the law as well as other heretical or disgraced texts could be held. The use of a cemetery cues one to the texts' proximity to personhood (they were also sometimes buried with respected deceased persons), and in much the same way that decommissioned stelai are known to have been plastered into walls in Iron Age Israel and Judah, worn-out scrolls have been found plastered into the walls of synagogues (Schleicher 2010, 21). The law's bearing of divine agency is also suggested by its protection of the deceased through the afterlife. A medieval Jewish mystical text called Sefer haZohar points to the apotropaic capacities of the law (Sefer haZohar 1.185a): "When a man's body is laid in the grave, the Torah keeps guard over it; it goes in

[30] For a brief discussion of the reception of translations of the Hebrew Bible as holy writings, see Smelik 1999. See also the contributions in Law and Salvesen 2012.