Footprints is a database that tracks the circulation of printed Jewish books. Much information about the movement of early printed books exists, but in scattered form: individual copies, catalogs from libraries and booksellers, estate inventories, subscription lists, and other kinds of archival documents. When connected, all of these individual pieces of data build a composite view of the movement of Jewish texts and ideas from place to place, and across time.

Each literary work or imprint represents a moment in time and space when an idea was conceived and documented. Each copy of the imprint also has its own history to share. This history is the essence of Footprints. The history of the book is an important part of humanities studies that has seen a resurgence as more books are digitized, emphasizing the importance of individual books as objects with their own unique story to tell.

Footprints works to close a research gap in the history of Jewish book circulation by building a large database of information related to

Footprints traces the history and movement of Jewish books since the inception of print. The database contains an important part of our common literary heritage, especially in the field of Jewish studies. By connecting scattered pieces of information from different sources, Footprints provides a comprehensive view of the movement of Jewish books and ideas from place to place, and across time.footprints.png

Footprints provides a method of capturing the most complete and accurate metadata possible given highly fragmentary sources.

Abuderham
A Literary Work
Arabic, Ashkenazic
Description: Landmark 14th-century work

Related Footprints
- The author's other works
- The book's influence on later works

The project roadmap—under development—includes new data visualization features such as timelines and maps.

COLUMBIA CTL
Center for Teaching and Learning
http://ctl.columbia.edu
ColumbiaCTL@columbia.edu
212.854.1692

FOOTPRINTS
http://footprints.ccnmtl.columbia.edu