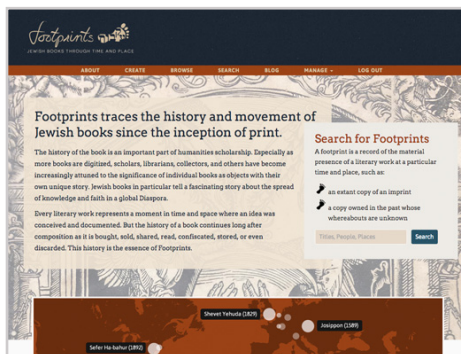# FOOTPRINTS
http://footprints.ccnmtl.columbia.edu

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.
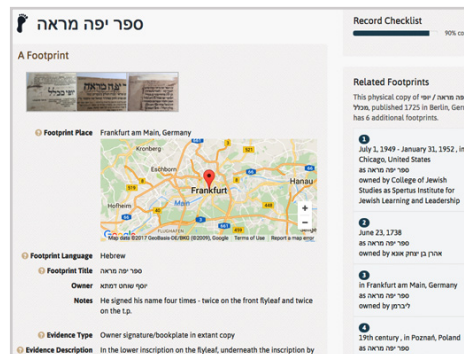
Footprints works to close a research gap in the history of Jewish book circulation by building a large database of information related to the circulation of copies of printed editions of Hebrew books, books in other Jewish languages, and books in Latin and non-Jewish vernaculars with significant Judaica content. This database will serve as the backbone for collaborative research projects and will be a significant resource for individual researchers, teachers, and students in Jewish history and the history of the book.
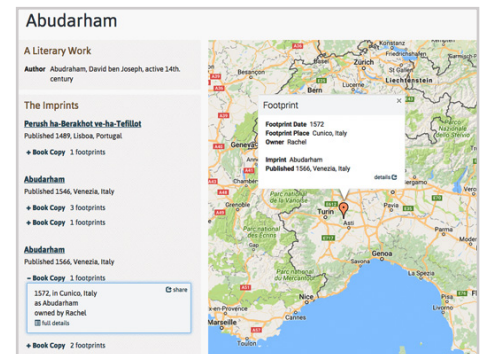
The site grew out of discussions of the Lillian Goldman Scholar's Working Group on the Jewish Book that has met under the auspices of the Center for Jewish History in New York since 2009 and was developed through a collaboration of researchers from the Jewish Theological Seminary, Columbia University, University of Pittsburgh, and Stony Brook University, as well as other partner institutions. Footprints has been developed by Columbia University's Center for Teaching and Learning as both an open source and open data application. Its source code and data are available for other projects to adopt, analyze, and build upon.

The Footprints website is complex and dynamic, with a usable, aesthetically pleasing interface that meets academic standards.

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

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