

BOX 9.1 Continued

artwork have been drawn if someone of her height was sitting in a chair or standing. Second, the ship graffiti also appeared to have been created by a wide variety of “artists” with differing skill levels and appeared to lack details that an adult familiar with ships or shipbuilding might include.

Baxter believes this ship iconography goes beyond merely child’s play. She suggests that ships may have been important to enslaved children for three reasons. First, ships were not commonplace

during the time in which graffiti was incised and symbolized a “lifeline to the world beyond San Salvador.” Second, ships may have been important to the enslaved because they are part of their “origin story” as to how they arrived on San Salvador. Lastly, Baxter believes that the ships were etched onto the buildings after the white enslavers left San Salvador. Ship graffiti may be the enslaved’s attempt to reinscribe and claim landscapes formerly controlled by the enslavers.