

# Experiencing nature through consumption: studying sailors' experiences

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## Objectives

The main objective of the study is to explore how consumers experience nature through consumption. The background of the current study is in unsustainable consumption of antifouling paints in leisure time boats. Therefore, the context of the research is studying sailors' experiences mainly at the Baltic Sea. It studies how nature ideologies influence sailors thought, speech and action and the relationships between the ideologies rising from sailor's experiences. The study also explores the meanings behind sailing consumption to find opportunities for sustainable consumption. The research lies under Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) concept addressing socio-cultural, experiential, symbolic and ideological consumption.

## Methodology

The research is interpretative and qualitative in nature. Six well-experienced Finnish sailors were interviewed. The interview transcriptions form the empirical data of the study. Interviews, analysis and interpretation followed the existential-phenomenological research approach and method.

## Key findings

The key findings of the study discover that multiple ideologies of nature influence sailing experiences simultaneously. These ideologies follow previously found Romantic and Gnostic ideologies but the findings show them to be too extreme creating a need for idealized solutions of Survival and Liberating ideologies. The study frames the multiple nature ideologies into a Semiotic Square of nature ideologies framework, which illustrates the contradictions between the ideologies and forms an interrelated synthesis between them. The findings also describe how sailing as a loved activity allows sailors to have advantages of the contradictive ideologies and bring synthesizing solution. This research finds that meanings behind sailing consumption stem from sailors' identity work and are driven by nature. Thus, the findings emphasize that marketers attempting to influence consumers' unsustainable consumption should focus not only on viewing nature as a single pure nature but studying the ideologies behind consumption and extending the view into a broader dynamic ideological model.

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**Keywords** Consumer culture, experiencing nature, nature ideologies, synthesizing solution, existential-phenomenology, sustainable consumption

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# Table of Contents

<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.2 Research question</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.3 Research structure</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2 Literature review</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>2.1 Consumer culture research</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>2.2 Sustainable consumption</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.2.1 Defining sustainable consumption .....	7
2.2.2 Consumerism and the debated reasons of unsustainable consumption .....	8
2.2.3 Attitude-behaviour gap .....	9
2.2.4 Social focus in sustainable consumption research .....	10
<b>2.3 Ideologies</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.3.1 Ideologies in sustainable consumption .....	12
2.3.2 Nature ideologies .....	13
<b>2.4 Studying sailors' experiences</b> .....	<b>16</b>
2.4.1 Overview of sailing .....	16
2.4.2 Brief history of sailing .....	18
2.4.3 Sailing at the Baltic Sea: current situation .....	20
<b>2.5 Summary</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>3 Methodology</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>3.1 Research approach</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>3.2 Data collection method</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>3.3 Interviewees</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>3.4 Data analysis method</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>4 Findings</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>4.2 Semiotic square – The Ideological Constitution of Sailing</b> .....	<b>30</b>
4.2.1 Romantic Ideology of nature .....	33
4.2.2 Gnostic Ideology of nature .....	38
4.2.3 Contrietary of man's power over nature .....	41
4.2.4 Nature as Survival ideology .....	46
4.2.5 Nature as Liberating ideology .....	51
4.2.6 Contrietary of agency .....	55
4.2.7 Contradiction of nature relation to man .....	58
4.2.8 Contradiction of nature relation to technology .....	59
<b>4.3 Synthesizing contradictory ideologies</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<b>4.4 Summary</b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b>5 Discussion</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>5.1 Theoretical implications</b> .....	<b>72</b>

<b>5.2 Limitations and further research .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>6 Conclusion.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>76</b>

# 1 Introduction

*The real exploratory expedition does not consist in looking for new landscapes, but in having new eyes*                      -Marcel Proust (cit. Johnson and Nurminen 2007)

The mysterious archipelago with open space, the view of the horizon behind which the sun rises early on a gorgeous summer morning, the soft summer wind blowing and greeting you with a gender touch. This romantic view of Baltic Sea gets every summer more than 3,5 million leisure boaters to the sea. The Baltic Sea is loved and admired but treated poorly with the passage of time. Being one of the most sensitive and polluted seas in the world, the ecological discussion of the conditions of Baltic Sea is bubbling. In these discussions sailors are often referred as the environmental friendly seafarers. However, the current use of boat paints and techniques are harmful and unsustainable. Thus a change in their consumption behaviour is needed.

Previous sustainable consumption literature has been wide-ranging. Being highly complex research field, it includes a lot of disagreement. It has been studied in multiple research fields such as in anthropology, sociology and marketing (Chen 2012). Marketing research studying sustainable consumption has long been unsuccessfully trying to understand the behaviour-attitude gap where consumers' attitudes are green but not resulting in green behaviour. The studies consistently found that even when consumers are concerned with the environment – they have a sustainable attitude, they are not behaving accordingly – their actions are still unsustainable (e.g. Vermeir and Verbeke 2006; Gupta and Ogden 2009). Thus, recent consumer culture theory studies argue attitude-behaviour studies to be too concentrated in isolated behavioural items (Shove 2010) and instead the more socially oriented studies have aimed to understand social structure of sustainable consumption (Spaargaaren 2003). They consider consumer behaviour historically developed by cultural and social interdependencies (Dolan 2002). Especially, recent cultural studies have emphasized understanding of ideologies in sustainable consumption (Holt 2012) that are powerful in influencing consumption and giving consumers sense of personal and social identity (Tumbat and Belk 2011). Thus, in order to understand unsustainable consumption one needs to explore ideologies and to understand the underlying market structures and consumption practices embodying the ideologies (Holt 2012).

A more sensitive approach to consumer experiences is needed to understand the ideologies that are already embedded in consumption (Barnett, Cafaro and Newholm 2005). To have a more explanatory power than the previous attitude-behaviour studies, the aim of the current study is to understand ideologies of nature. Following Holt (2012), the study argues that in order to influence unsustainable consumption, marketers need to understand ideologies of consumption. Thus, the study explores consumer ideologies that tend to channels and reproduce consumers' thoughts, feelings, emotions and actions (Hirschman 1993). Previous consumer research literature has focused on only two extreme ideologies of nature: Romantic and Gnostic - romantic being the maternal and sacred nature whereas Gnostic emphasizing the harsh side of nature and people having agency to overcome it. However, the current study found that Romantic and Gnostic ideologies are too extreme and create a need for idealized solutions. The study forms the analysis into a Semiotic Square of nature ideologies.

The context of this study is sailing experiences. The aim is to understand the nature ideologies behind sailing that influence sailing consumption and cause unsustainable behaviour. The interview data indicated that there exists no single pure nature but multiple ideologies influence sailing experiences simultaneously. Thus the study contributes to previous literature by following the dynamic ideological model of consumption. Moreover, it aims at extending previous research on how multiple ideologies (Kozinets 2008) of nature influence nature experiences simultaneously creating a meaning behind sailing consumption. The ideologies of nature are contradictive and contrietary. The current study also extends previous research by exploring how loved activities bring a synthesizing solution (Ahuvia 2005) between the different ideologies– how sailing as a loved activity allows sailors to have advantages of the contradictive ideologies. The sailors are able to move between the ideologies even during a single sailing experience making the experience of sailing a meaningful every time.

These findings are relevant to existing academic literature as they clarify the previously founded ideologies of nature (Thompson 2004; Canniford and Shankar 2013) by extending the view to dynamic ideological model (Kozinets 2008). They broaden the discussion of sustainable consumption by following Holt (2012) and studying ideologies behind consumption in order to understand unsustainable consumption. The findings also bring interesting insight to policy makers and activists seeking ways to have effective

interventions. It emphasizes that positive environmental attitudes don't always result in greener consumption (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997). Therefore societies focus should be more on the social focused movements (Holt 2012). This study thus extends the view of ideologies of nature and sustainable consumption bringing interesting new directions to future research.

The study is qualitative and interpretive by nature as it aims to get an in-depth understanding of the topic. It is an individualist epistemological perspective conceptualizing knowledge from individual experience (Moisander, Valtonen and Hirsto 2009). The basis of the study is in-depth existential-phenomenological interviews (McCracken 1986; Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1989) of experienced Finnish sailors sailing mainly in the Baltic Sea. The interviews were conducted with 6 well-experienced sailors both women and men. Sustainability was purposefully not introduced in the interviews to see if it emerges as a theme on its own.

## **1.1 Background**

The study is part of international EU funded research project combining natural science, business administration and environmental law. It explores how to change antifouling practices for leisure boats in the Baltic Sea. The project is driven by Swedish government with Denmark, Germany and Finland taking part.

The project is based on the currently difficult situation at the Baltic Sea. There are around 3.5 million leisure boaters in the Baltic Sea. A great majority of them use toxic compounds to prevent fouling organisms (i.e. barnacle) to attach to the boat hull. This is known as antifouling. The toxics used in the anti-biofouling paints erode slowly over time causing environmental harm to the underwater organisms (Thomas and Brooks 2010). The ambition of the project is to change the boat owners' behavior into a more sustainable use of antifouling methods.

The research at hand is social science concentrating on exploring the meanings and ideologies behind leisure boating, sailing to be precise, in order to give better understanding of sailors' unsustainable behaviour. It is a pre-study setting a background to the research and increasing understanding when the project advances.

## 1.2 Research question

The study aims at exploring the experiences and meanings behind sailing consumption through the following questions:

*How do consumers experience nature through sailing?*

The above question is the main research question of the study aiming to find out how sailors experience nature through consumption. Experiencing nature is a multisided and complex phenomenon that is perceived differently by every sailor. In order to understand sailors' consumption behaviour it is useful to explore the different underlying ideologies. Thus the study focuses on understanding the ideologies of nature - how they relate to each other and how they form a coherent and full experience to the sailors. Thus the first sub-question inquires:

*1. How do nature ideologies influence sailors thought, speech and action?*

Nature offers diverse meanings and experiences to consumers (Canniford and Shankar 2013). To be able to understand the experiences of nature through sailing, we need to understand what is sailing consumption. Moreover, we need to understand the meanings of sailing consumption. When understanding the underlying meanings behind sailing consumption we are able to further understand how nature relates to it. Accordingly, Heiskanen and Pantzar (1997) argue that studying meanings gives a rich picture by involving the consumer itself and social relations. Products are not bought simply to satisfy needs and consumption activities are not taken part of only to stay alive. Symbolic meanings behind consumption give thus deeper understanding of consumption (Barnett et al. 2005). Therefore the second sub-question to ask is:

*2. What are the meanings behind sailing consumption?*

The study background is in sustainable consumption research focusing on understanding sailor's unsustainable consumption. Even though not a central inquiry, based on the findings of the previous questions the current study will also offer preliminary directions in guiding more sustainable consumption. Thus third sub-question of the study is:



*3. What kind of opportunities for sustainable consumption do the findings of sailors' nature experience offer?*

### **1.3 Research structure**

The study is divided into six different chapters. The first one gives an overview of the research as well as the aim of the research, presents the research questions and objectives. The second chapter goes through the previous literature behind the research. It introduces briefly the study background in Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), presents the previous discussion of sustainable consumption and explains the study context in experiencing nature through sailing consumption. Chapters three and four present the empirical part of the study. In chapter three the research methodology presents the research approach and method to collect the research data. The fourth chapter goes through the findings of the study. Lastly the chapter five links the previous research to the empirical part of the study and discusses about future research. At the end the research literature is presented.

## **2 Literature review**

This section presents the theoretical framework. First the basis of the study in consumer culture theory is presented. Second, the previous literature of sustainable consumption in marketing research is covered. Third the context of the research – experiencing nature through consumption and sailing– is explained. Finally, the conclusion sums up relevant previous literature and argues how the current study contributes to this existing academic discussion.

### **2.1 Consumer culture research**

This section clarifies the background of the study in Consumer Culture Theory. The research at hand lies under Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) concept addressing socio-cultural, experiential, symbolic and ideological consumption. Rather than being a unified theory, CCT is a big umbrella concept of research concentrated on studying the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, marketplace and cultural meanings (Arnould and Thompson 2005). It is a fresh way of gaining knowledge of the complexity of consumer behaviour. The cultural perspective of consumer behaviour follows the idea of people living in the culturally constituted world. Therefore, most importantly CCT offers a better understanding of the complexity of the cultural knowledge of the marketplace. (Moisander and Valtonen 2006).

CCT enables the study to concentrate on experiential, social and cultural dimensions of consumption and to study consumption phenomena in their natural setting (Belk 1988). It is especially useful for the study at hand as it enables to put consumption in the centre of how people construct their worlds (Moisander and Valtonen 2006).

### **2.2 Sustainable consumption**

*“ ‘sustainable consumption’ [...] suggests that all social actors should optimize their efficient use of available resources by ‘doing more with less’ ”*

(Hobson 2003, pp. 95)

This section describes what is meant with sustainable consumption in this study and presents the debated nature of sustainable consumption discussion in previous research. It presents

the shortcomings of previous attitude-behaviour gap research and emphasizes a more social focus of sustainable consumption.

### **2.2.1 Defining sustainable consumption**

Environmental problems are increasing and natural disasters such as recent typhoons, tsunamis, storms and others have played shocking wake-up calls for besides environmentalists, for also politicians, business managers and consumers. Human interaction with natural environment can have negative impact (Kilbourne 2004) .Thus many researchers from different fields have studied sustainability aiming to offer solutions for solving the environmental problems (Holt 2012).

The relationship between marketing and environment has been explored in marketing research since 1970s (Kilbourne 2004). One of the most discussed research topics arousing environmental activism has been sustainable consumption (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997). It originates from the discussion where consumption is seen as a key driver for environmental degradation (Cohen 2006). It has thus been studied in anthropology, social psychology, sociology and management to mention few (Røpke 2009; Chen 2012). Being a complex and highly debated phenomenon it is studied extensively also in marketing research (e.g. Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997; Kilbourne, McDonagh and Prothero 1997; Dolan 2002; Holt 2012). Sustainable consumption is especially interesting for marketing research from the respective of marketing ethics, consumer culture and consumer behaviour (Cohen 2006).

There are numerous different definitions of sustainable consumption (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997; Dolan 2002). Sustainable development is commonly referred in the literature as meeting “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, pp. 8) Therefore, sustainable consumption means responding to the needs of present generations and bringing better quality of life now without jeopardizing the needs of future generations (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997; Dolan 2002; Shrivastava 1995). It takes into account the environmental, economical and social sustainability (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997). In addition, according to Kilbourne et al. (1997) sustainable consumption takes future generation needs into account, minimizes environmental effects and aims at satisfying needs generating better quality of life. It is a decision-making process considering consumers’

social responsibility as well as their individual needs and wants (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006).

### **2.2.2 Consumerism and the debated reasons of unsustainable consumption**

The role of consumerism has been highly debated in the sustainable consumption discussion (Cherrier 2009) and consumer movements, such as anti-consumption have been studied (Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Cherrier 2009). Heiskanen and Pantzar (1997) argue that environmental degradation is caused by unsustainable social and economic behaviour. Further, previous research argues that consumer behaviour is shaped by consumerism when it is considered as a set of values driving consumers towards consumption (Holt 2012). Consumption at the same time maintains the increasing material welfare by providing the basis for quality of life influencing negatively on the environment. (Kilbourne et al. 1997).

Some researchers even argue that the only possible solution to move away from unsustainable consumption behaviour is to move completely away from consumerism – the less we consume the less we need to produce and the less bad influences are caused to the environment (Jackson 2011). That is highly debatable as consumption provides comfort, helps in construction of one's self and in communicating it to others and also satisfies physical and emotional needs (Cherrier and Murray 2007). Arnould (2007) also argues that consumerism is a powerful tool for consumers to influence in the marketplace political actions – to have agency in the marketplace. In addition, according to Holt (2012) consumerism is dominating the overall society and is impossible quickly to move away from. It is not a distant or autonomous set of generic values and it is not the only cause on unsustainable consumption (Holt 2012).

As we can see, sustainable consumption is a complex issue involving disagreement. Different actors are blaming on each other for the causes of unsustainable consumption. There has been difficulty in creating analytic space to sustainable consumption as it has repeatedly been bypassed with more easily approached sustainable production (Michaelis 2002; Cohen 2006). Consumption is the reason why anything gets produced and consumers make the consumption choices. (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997) Thus, producers argue that consumers have the main responsibility over sustainable consumption. On the other hand, consumers consume products that are supplied to them and they may not have enough knowledge of the consequences of their consumption patterns. Therefore, producers should

have responsibility in communicating and educating consumers about their products and sustainable usage (Røpke 2009). This leads to the fact where in the modern highly industrialized society no one feels responsible or powerful enough to affect the marketplace (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997). Thus pointing a finger at someone is easy, but taking responsibility of one's own actions is difficult. In addition, even when consumers are aware of their unsustainable behaviour, they do not change their behaviour accordingly.

### **2.2.3 Attitude-behaviour gap**

It would be logical to think that green attitude on consumption would lead to greener consumption. Following the idea, a person that is a nature loving person wanting to protect environment would not buy an un-environmentally friendly car. However, consumer research studies tackling the problem of unsustainable consumption have discovered that positive attitudes of environment are not resulting in sustainable behaviour (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997; Vermeir and Verbeke 2006; Gupta and Ogden 2009). The discovery of the gap between attitude and behaviour reveals the challenging consumer environment for marketers (Gupta and Ogden 2009; Røpke 2009). According to the consumer attitude research, people behave according to their attitudes. (Gupta and Ogden 2009) We would think that it would then be logical to influence consumers' attitudes to become greener resulting then in greener consumption. However, green consumerism was founded already in late 1980's to increase environmental awareness and to raise the opportunities of environmental behaviour in business (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997). Previous research studying consumers' concerns towards the environment then revealed that most consumers are interested in the environment (Gupta and Ogden 2009) and their attitudes are mainly positive (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). However, no significant change in the attitude-behaviour consistency has been shown in the sustainable consumption. Consumers' motives for buying products is usually not because they are more sustainable but the motives are more often convenience, hedonism, habits or value for money just to mention few. That has lead to the extensive research of attitude-behaviour gap (Gupta and Ogden 2009).

Even though positive attitude toward sustainable products is a good start for more sustainable consumption, it does not result necessarily in more sustainable behaviour (Vermeir and Verbeke 2006). The problem with behaviour-attitude studies is that they are trying to import values from outside the marketplace (Holt 2012). The studies are viewing consumption as an autonomous and isolated set of actions (Dolan 2002). Even though the

consumption actions might seem concrete and easily manageable, policy makers should move away from individual choice and extend the focus on societal change (Shove 2010). Moreover, changing unsustainable behaviour needs a system orientation meaning reflexive governance, continual dynamic changes, feedback, monitoring, circuit of action and reaction. Sustainable consumption patterns are social and thus they should not be viewed as outcomes of individual choice. (Shove and Walker 2007).

#### **2.2.4 Social focus in sustainable consumption research**

Cultural studies reject the autonomous view of behaviour of attitude-behaviour studies and relate sustainable consumption to cultural and social practices (Dolan 2002). They argue that a thorough study needs to take into account behavioural practices situated in time and space, practices that consumers share with others, thus emphasizing the social structure of behaviour (Spaargaren 2002). Accordingly, social structures are then brought into the centre of the analysis.

The concentration towards social and cultural practices has emphasized the understanding of ideologies. Dolan (2002) emphasizes understanding consumption ideology for identifying culturally specific possibilities for intervention in unsustainable behaviour rather than viewing consumption only as the problem. His view takes into account that consumer practices are historically developed by cultural and social interdependencies rather than separate acts. Moreover, it sees consumers not simply as easily manipulated by advertising but as influenced by their cultural background. Furthermore, according to Dolan in order to get more sustainable solutions we need to study the particular histories behind consumption to get culturally specific changes more likely. Thus, this more social view sees consumers not only consuming products and services responding to basic needs but sees those needs interrelated into social and cultural context. Further, according to Holt (2012), whether a market has the potential to become sustainable depends on social movements and subcultures within the market.

Consumer culture theory takes the larger view of consumption relating it with cultural and social context. According to CCT, marketplace provides recourses to consumers from which they construct individual and collective identities. Further, rather than being culture bearers, consumers are perceived as culture producers. (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Therefore

the pathway to more sustainable consumption requires taking the marketplace into account and should start with exploring the markets (Holt 2012).

Following CCT market construction arguments, Holt (2012) continues the discussion of the influence of ideologies in sustainable consumption. According to Holt (2012), unsustainable consumption is an unintended consequence of ideological lock-in. Ideological lock-in refers to dynamic unintended patterns of consumption structured by market causing unsustainable consumption. It holds consumption in place in three ways: first naturalizing of the market ideology, second when consumers get used to the everyday consumption practices that embody the ideology and third through market institutions that materialize the ideology according to their assumptions. Furthermore, sustainable consumption can be reached through social market movements by identifying the lock-in features within a marketplace. Holt (2012). Also Heiskanen and Pantzar (1997) argue that no impact on changes in sustainable consumption can be achieved if we lack of understanding the reason and ideologies behind consumption.

Thus, according to these previous studies, in order to understand unsustainable consumption one needs to explore ideologies and to understand the underlying market structures and consumption practices embodying the ideologies. The next section will briefly explain marketplace ideologies and the dynamic interplay between them.

### **2.3 Ideologies**

Following the social focus in sustainable consumption, in order to influence sustainable behaviour one needs to understand marketplace ideologies. This part defines ideologies and explains how they have been used in sustainable consumption research. It also presents how ideologies of nature have been previously researched.

The study of ideologies is part of research related to identity. Following CCT research, consumers are identity seekers and makers but also influenced by marketplaces ideologies in their identity work (Arnould and Thompson 2005). A more in-depth description of identity is out of scope of this study and thus only a brief explanation is given. Following Belk (1988) “self”, “sense” and “identity” are used as synonyms to present how a person subjectively presents who she or he is. The self-concept is all about understanding who we are. It is a subjective assessment that is responsive to other people and changes over time

(Belk 1988). Therefore by identity and self-concept the current study refers to person's own view of himself or herself.

Consumption can furthermore help in defining self when consumers choose products according to their self-image (Schau and Gilly 2003). It is a route for understanding consumers' practices, thoughts and needs. Being not fixed, personal identity can be formed or reformed by consumption (Belk 1988). Thus, numerous consumption possessions reflect the identity (Ahuvia 2005). The material objects that are owned by someone become cues for defining how the person and others perceive him. Belk (1988) sees consumers possessing the inner core self that is expanded to items that become part of the extended self. The extended self can be experienced through concrete set of things, people or places (Belk 1988). Identity research also discusses possession rituals that are such that consumers do to impose their extended self to their surroundings (Tian and Belk 2005).

### **2.3.1 Ideologies in sustainable consumption**

To succeed in the transformation towards sustainable consumption the process must proceed from market to market rather than generalizing consumer society (Holt 2012). Each market is influenced by its cultural and social history and practices (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Moreover, each market is formed by specific marketplace ideologies (Holt 2012). They are powerful in influencing consumption and giving consumers sense of personal and social identity (Tumbat and Belk 2011).

Ideology is a complex and contested but highly used concept in consumer research (Crockett and Wallendorf 2004). This part will only briefly discuss the previous literature of the research of ideologies, as the nature of ideologies is discussed more thoroughly through the research data. Hirschman (1993) presents a coherent definition viewing ideology "as a system of beliefs and values that emanate from and promulgate the worldview of the dominant group in society". In other words, ideologies are systems of meaning reproducing and influencing consumers' behaviour and thoughts (Arnould and Thompson 2005). It is the collection of norms, values and habits (Kilbourne 2004).

Previous research shows that there is a constant interplay and movement between different ideologies and one consumption experience can be influenced by multiple ideologies (Thompson 2004; Kozinets 2008). This is in line with CCT analysis of consumers



participating in the culture creation. However, the previous research defined ideology similar to culture treating it erroneously as static and totalized (Arnould and Thompson 2005). As the ideology is a cultural phenomenon, it is never a closed system. Rather there are many interconnected ideologies coexisting within any particular social systems where some ideologies can dominate others (Dolan 2002).

Thompson's (2004) study exploring natural health marketplace shows an example of a marketplace clearly embedded by multiple ideological agendas. Further, Kozinets' (2008) study of technology ideology demonstrated systematic nature of the interactions between the ideological elements. Moreover, consumers shift from one ideological element to another based on their own social situation and psychological orientation. Kozinets (2008) extends the previous literature by presenting the dynamic ideological model in which different ideological elements are accelerated by internal contradiction. The contradictions represent the various players aiming to reach their own interests. Thus, ideologies have a dynamic form; each ideology links to every other one enriching and expanding the basic relationship. In particular, the ideological elements can coexist in an individual experience as the ideological elements are connected to one another. (Kozinets 2008).

### **2.3.2 Nature ideologies**

Experiencing nature is a highly discussed theme in consumer behaviour. It is connected to environmental sustainability arousing questions of how consumers experience nature through consumption. This part of the literature review discusses the previous research of nature ideologies and how nature is related to consumer's identity.

As became clear in the definition of sustainable consumption, it is not only related to environmental sustainability. However, this study concentrates on sustainable consumption behaviour related to environment. Environmental issues are caused by social and economic behaviour mediated through technology affecting natural environment, which is affecting social and economic environments (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997) Thus, even though the context of the study is to explore how consumers experience nature through consumption, also social and economic environments will be touched on. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in order to understand consumers' unsustainable behaviour one needs to explore the ideologies of consumption behind it. Thus, this study focuses on exploring and explaining the ideologies of nature.

Nature as either a setting of consumption or even an object of consumption has become much discussed in consumer research in relation to for example consumption communities (Belk and Costa 1998), loved objects and activities (Ahuvia 2005), technology ideologies (Kozinets 2008) and purifying practices (Canniford and Shankar 2013). It has been studied in the context for example of modern mountain men (Belk and Costa 1998), surfing culture (Canniford and Shankar 2011), river rafting (Arnould and Price 1993), commercialized climbing expeditions on Everest (Tumbat and Belk 2010) and Burning man –antimarket event (Kozinets 2002). It is a rich area for consumer culture research manifesting ideologies, culture and consumer behaviour (Thompson 2004; Thumbat and Belk 2011). The experiences of nature are filled with logical contradictions and contraries (Canniford and Shankar 2012).

In the previous marketing research the experiencing of nature has been discussed mainly as romantic consumption. The idea of escaping the modern and hectic life to nature is a romantic idea (Arnould 2007). Ideologies of nature have usually been defined as the search for romantic experience of nature (Belk and Costa 1998; Arnould and Price 1993; Canniford and Shankar 2013). Nature is embraced as organic, peaceful, wild, clean, and having mystical force to heal people from their stress caused by modern life (Thompson 2004). It is pristine and untouched where no one has entered (Cronon 1996) Nature is a mix of mysticism and romance – a maternal power making it easier to relax and get away from hectic life. It is sacred and not taken for granted (Canniford and Shankar 2013) and lived with in cooperation.

Some previous research has sought to distinguish romantic nature from culture viewing romantic nature outside of culture. However, many studies present how consumers experience nature through culture. (Canniford and Shankar 2013) For example Arnould and Price (1993) research exploring commercial river rafting trips found that the power of river rafting lies in the romantic cultural scripts integrating the consumers in harmony with the nature. The guides were enhancing the romantic experience that the consumers were longing for with creating cultural scripts by articulating cultural norms related to the romantic expectations of the customers. This is only one of the many examples emphasizing that the experiences are not a reaction against commercialization but rather enhancing the experience of romantic nature.

However, another even conflicting ideology of nature is Gnostic ideology - survival of overcoming nature with technology and preparing for the revenge of nature (Thompson 2004). The term Gnostic was first brought to marketing research by Thompson (2004) studying mythologies in natural health marketplace. It refers to a perspective where consumers gain the dominance over nature with technology and science. It follows the modernistic idea from sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of people being able to create their own paradise. Their human capabilities to conquer nature are enhanced with technology. Further, the ideology enables consumers to have a Gnostic control over one's environment. This perspective also takes into account the possibility of the revenge of nature. The revenge refers to the idea of nature eventually coming back at humans for causing harm to its sacred property where Gnostic technology can be a liberator of such revenge. (Thompson 2004). The relationship between these two even conflicting ideologies is complex.

Marketing research literature discusses mainly the maternal force of nature forgetting the other side of nature as revenging and dangerous. The ideal is enhanced by media picturing nature as green and harmonic place, almost a gateway to another world of peacefulness and relaxation. The dangerous forces are usually left out (Scholz 2012). The problem of picturing nature purely romantic is that the image is hard to keep and means almost passive experiences (Merchant 1990). Moreover, when considering experiencing nature through consumption, the passive view of consumers is not applicable. A more dynamic conceptualization is needed. According to the dynamic nature, consumers are active creators of harmony with the nature. It takes into account both sides of nature and considers that in order to achieve a harmony with nature, consumers' actions need to be considered to be engaged with nature. Therefore, when considering sustainable marketing picturing nature, marketers should draw on the more realistic, dynamic view of nature by considering the maternal power of nature as well as the challenging side. (Scholz 2012).

Such as the studies of nature ideologies show, experiencing nature relates to identity issues that are complex and multisided. Consumers reflect themselves and their experiences through experiences in nature making each experience connected to consumer's identity. Identity work is an ever on-going process that is full of contradictions and encompasses multiple possession objects and consumption activities (Ahuvia 2005). Identity is full of conflicts that consumers try to resolve through different strategies (Ahuvia 2005). Ahuvia

(2005) presents three ways of how consumers tend to resolve their identity conflicts supposing a consumer is experiencing a conflict between possible identities A and B. First one is “a demarcating solution” where the A identity is endorsed and B rejected. The second one “a compromising solution” aims to create an identity pathway between the conflicting identities A and B. The third one “a synthesizing solution” offers to the customers the advantages of both A and B and is a novel resolution to the conflict. Furthermore, according to Ahuvia, the third strategy is especially interesting as it allows combining the previously conflicting aspects of consumers’ identity. He argues that especially loved objects and activities produce synthesizing solution. That makes the current study context of sailing an interesting research context.

## **2.4 Studying sailors’ experiences**

The context to study experiencing nature in this research is to explore experiencing sailing. Sailing provides an excellent context of the study. It has become increasingly popular in Finland and other countries around the Baltic Sea. It is also a high-involvement hobby or even a lifestyle for many sailors (Jalas 2006). Thus it makes possible a more in-depth study of experiencing nature. Sailing is an old way of conquering nature and has influenced in human relation to nature in many ways. It made mobility easier and has developed a lot from the ancient days when the first sailboats were made (Sleight 2001). The study is conducted in researching sailors around the Baltic Sea that plays an excellent location for sustainable consumption research. Being highly polluted by paper mills, agriculture and leisure activities the environmental discussion has been furious trying to find a solution to rescue the sea (Rheinheimer 1998). Here the study briefly defines sailing, presents the history of it and the current situation and environmental effects of sailing at the Baltic Sea.

### **2.4.1 Overview of sailing**

*“Many people talk about moments that change their life, sometimes people experience something that changes their thinking, their perspective and lifestyle, and even take a new direction. This can happen at any time in your life, but for me, I was just four. I stepped onboard the deck of a boat, it was my first time on the water, and it was to be an experience that would change my life forever”*

(Jeremy Evans 2008 pp. 13)

This section will briefly explain the basics of sailing to readers who are not aware of them. The description is very brief and not thorough as more extensive explanation is out of context of this study. With sailing the study refers to recreational sailing for pleasure (Evans 2008 pp. 32). Sailing provides a precious experience to anyone wanting to feel the elements of wind and water closely (Smith, Evan and Manley 2013). It is about experiencing the open water and learning to understand the nature (Evans 2008 pp. 32). Especially, it crystalizes the feeling of freedom and moving forward (Jalas 2006). By definition sailing basically means moving with sailing boat mainly with the help of wind (Evans 2001). Sailing can be considered as extraordinary consumption experience. It is triggered by unforeseen events including high levels of intensity and experience (Arnould and Price 1993).

Sailing can be practiced basically anywhere where there is water; at seas and lakes, inland or coastal areas etc. (Evans 2008 pp. 38). Sailing is commonly divided roughly into two: cruising and racing. Cruising refers to leisure time activity of moving from one place to another. It can involve sleeping at the boat for possibly many nights from a weekend trip to all around the world trip. The boats for cruising are built to stand for harsh weather. (Sleight 2005 pp. 22). Racing is sports where one competes against others either solo or with a team against one competitor or many. There are several types of races and racing boats and the races can be either short or long distance races. (Evans 2001).

There are numerous different types of sailing boats. The most common are the small open boat dinghy, catamarans with two hulls separated by a mesh platform, keelboats that are open boats slightly larger than dinghies and yachts that are keelboats with cabins and accommodation (Evans 2008 pp. 42-43). The boats can be made of wood, fiberglass, aluminium or plastic. Wooden boats are nowadays not as common and used mainly by traditionalist. (Evans 2001 pp. 19-20). The boat parts differ in different sailing boats, however every boat has the basic parts that are mainsail, mast, boom, tiller, rudder, keel and hull (Sleight 2005).

The modern sailing boats have engines but sailors try to use them as little as they can (Smith et al. 2013). Sailing boats get their power from the wind. The sail needs to be in a right angle in respect to the wind in order to the boat to move in a right direction. (Evans 2001 pp. 28) With the wind blowing at the sail surface it creates pressure to the sides of the sail and with the help of keel moves the boat (Sleight 2001 pp. 30). At its simplest the boat moves

downwind meaning that the wind is blowing from behind the boat (Evans 2001 pp. 42). All modern sailing boats can move also upwind with the help of airfoil effect using the sideways force of the sails (Evans 2008 pp. 66). Managing the headsail allows the sailor to manage the boat and adapt to the weather conditions. The headsail can be rolled out when the wind is not as strong and rolled away again in stronger winds. That is called reefing and it is intended to improve the boat's stability. (Evans 2008, pp.184-186).

The maintenance of the boat is highly important part of owning a boat (Jalas 2006). The boat needs constant maintenance. It needs to be washed with fresh water every once in a while after sailing in salty water. Especially when laying up and launching the boat, one must go through all the parts carefully (Evans 2001 pp. 116-117). The boat hull is checked and cleaned carefully every spring and autumn from possible biofouling organisms such as barnacle to keep it clean and easier to navigate (Yebra et al. 2003).

#### **2.4.2 Brief history of sailing**

This section briefly discusses the history of sailing – how it started and became this big cultural phenomenon. Water has been a mysterious goddess that never reveals its face. It is attractive, strong and gentle but also dangerous, even rebellious. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 18-19) The earliest sights of basic shipping boats are from eighth century BC. Early on, the water was districting element for humans. One of the greatest problems between humans and the surrounding nature was how to conquer sea. The boats were used first at rivers and lakes and only later at the sea because rivers and lakes weren't as dangerous as sea, thus being easier to conquer. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 28). The first sailing boats were far from the modern boats sailors use nowadays. They had small sails and basic wooden raft where the sailors were sitting. When the wind became too rough the sails were let down. When new invention of vehicles and boats developed improving mobility, the culture with water moved from negative to positive. The water became an important element of developing culture. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 22).

However, not every man was able to sail. Managing and maintaining the boat played a vital role in already in the early days. The talent to sail was believed to transmit within a family. Already at the ancient days it was common to sail in a group and to have one well-experienced sailor as a head of the boat. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 44). Therefore, the first sailboats were meant for transferring people rather than goods. They all contained some sort

of stick for moving the boat for windless weather, which later developed into oars. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 40-47). The longer journeys across the sea were made possible only after wind was properly used for the source of power (Hornborg 1965 pp. 31). However, the first sailboats were able to sail only downwind. (Sleight 2005 pp. 10) In the early sailing boats reefing the sails was unknown. The sails were managed with pulling strings to make them smaller when the wind was strong. The hull was painted or tarred and later the bottom was covered with metal. (Sleight 2005 pp.55)

Sailing has been highly important in the Baltic Sea. According to Hornborg (1965 pp. 24) the most meaningful origins of shipping have been in South-Europe, North-Europe, Arabia and China. Scandinavians started using sails only around year 500 because the North was inhabited late. The first sailors in Scandinavia were the Vikings. Scandinavians were said to be the most talented shipbuilders in the world. Their boats were able to sail near the shore and were well built. The main development in Scandinavia happened in the Baltic Sea area, Gotland being the main place. The difficult weather conditions and distant location from other cultures forced them to build up strong boats. The waves were steep and the sea so cold that it would have been impossible to wait for the storm to calm down at the sea and the wind was unforeseeable and changeable. (Hornborg 1923 pp.108-116). The sailing developed from west to east in the Baltic Sea as the sea around Denmark was full of shoals and Norway was harsh and sparsely inhabited (Hornborg 1923 pp.119).

The modern sailing started developing after the Second World War (Sleight 2005 pp. 12-14). The sailing boats were used as the only way to cross the sea until 1800 century when the more efficient and faster steamboats replaced them. After that sailing started to become more as a leisure time hobby and used for pleasure trips. (Johnson 1984 pp. 9) Previously the conditions at the sailboats were bad making especially longer sailing trips and shipping unattractive. In 1800 century the conditions improved making sailing and especially yachting more tempting. Improvements for sailing conditions were also decreasing the dangers of sailing. In addition in 1853 “The Royal National Life-Boat Institution” was established improving the rescue operations at the sea. (Hornborg 1965 pp. 473). The non-commercial sailing, referred as yachting, started already in 1500-1600 centuries. Yachts were developed because the commercial ships were not suitable for leisure time sailing, as they were too crude. The yachts were smaller and easier to handle. (Johnson 1989 pp. 10). Recreational sailing was first a sport for only wealthy people and considered as royal hobby.

The restriction for others to sails was but high cost of the boat also the restrictions of access to water. Yacht clubs had a hold on training and mooring facilities. The situation changed in 1960s when mooring space was opened to everyone also without a membership in yacht club. (Evans 2008 pp.20-23).

This short introduction of the history of sailing presents how sailing has had a huge impact on the experience of nature, especially to sea and forming culture. It also presents the importance of maintaining the boat. Sailing has a long and multiphase history. It is an interesting context as it is highly multifaceted phenomenon. It is on the one hand sacred and honoured offering numerous possibilities for culture to develop but on the other hand scary and dangerous causing wars and spread of disease (Hornborg 1965). Conquering nature and sea through sailing has significant impact on how people experience nature. It has made easier to understand and even control the wind to some extent and made nature closer to humans.

#### **2.4.3 Sailing at the Baltic Sea: current situation**

The current situation of sailing at the Baltic Sea further explains the background of the study. The Baltic Sea is almost entirely surrounded by land making it sensitive and endangered to pollution. The coastal ecosystem is of utmost importance for the whole wellbeing of the Baltic Sea (European commission 2007a). It is an important feeding ground for pelagic fish as well as a source of pleasure for people (Rheinheimer 1998). However, multiple environmental problems such as fisheries and aquaculture depletion, species loss and loss of natural sea defences have been encountered (Helcom 2011).

The number of leisure boats increases every year and new marinas are being built to meet the increasing demand (Rheinheimer 1998). According to Helsinki commission (2011), cruising has increased from 1.1 million in 2000 to 3.1 million in 2010. The number for 2011 at that time was expected to be almost 3.5 million passengers and the number is only rising. Boating has strong traditions in the Nordic countries especially at the coastal areas where coastal tourism forms an important economic sector. It also has strong cultural history at the Nordics. In addition, the increase of living standards at the southern parts of Baltic has lead to an increased number of leisure boats. (Helcom 2011).



Even though sailing boats are un-environmental, motorboats are the main problem within leisure boats as they leave sewage and cause nuisance and noise, also sailors cause harm to the environment. They for example disturb the water birds and the great majority of them use toxic compounds to prevent fouling organism to attach to the boat (Rheinheimer 1998). The biggest environmental challenge with sailing at the Baltic Sea is antifouling. Antifouling refers to the process of removing fouling organisms from the boat hull. Marine biofouling is the accumulation of organisms such as slime forming microorganism, plant or animals on boat hull. (Rheinheimer 1998). Antifouling is done because the fouling organisms attached to the boat hull increase the boat weight, slows down the boat and makes it harder to navigate the boat. Biofouling is thus a safety issue and a continual problem for any boat owner. The EU forbade some of the strongest and most unfriendly paints in 1989 but a lot of the paint still exists at the older boats. These paints erode slowly over time ending up to the soil and sediment. (Yebra et al. 2003).

## **2.5 Summary**

Sustainable consumption has been studied in marketing from many angles and debates of the right ways of solving unsustainable consumption is bubbling. The previously common research exploring attitude-behaviour gap has been questioned by more socially focused consumer culture theory studies. The most recent cultural studies emphasize that no impact on changes are possible if we lack of understanding of the ideologies behind consumption.

The context of the study at hand exploring sustainable consumption is studying how consumers experience nature through consumption. In order to understand these experiences one needs to understand the ideologies behind them. Thus, the study focuses on nature ideologies. In previous research there has been identified only two ideologies of nature: Romantic and Gnostic. To get more throughout understanding of the ideologies and the relationships between them a more dynamic model is needed.

A good context for studying nature ideologies is to study sailors' experiences. Sailing is highly driven by the nature and varying weather conditions. Sailors aim to get close to the sea and nature and to feel they are capable of conquering the sea. Sailing is also interesting context for the study as even though having highly dependent and loving relationship with nature the maintenance practices of sailors are unsustainable. Sailing is closely tied to nature and thus has a lot of potential of involving sustainability driven consumers. However, as the

current situation at the Baltic Sea shows they still have some sustainability issues. The sustainability is balanced with safety and comfort. Thus, it is interesting to study in-depth the relationship between experiencing nature and sailing.

### **3 Methodology**

This section will present the research approach and data collection method. It also describes the interviewed informants as well as how the data is analyzed.

#### **3.1 Research approach**

The research is qualitative and interpretive. The study aims at understanding sailors' behaviour – not predicting it (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). Rather than only explaining sailors' experiences and how they know it, the study purpose is to describe sailors' experience as it is lived (Thompson et al. 1989). The study does not claim there exists only one objective reality but rather follows the idea of people making sense of their world through constructing theories and social situations (Hudson and Ozanne 1988).

The research aims at discovering the deeper experiences of nature through sailing and researching the experience of individual's relationship with time, space and personal history. Different ideologies affect sailors' experiences making them complex and multisided. Therefore, the research approach is interpretive and moreover existential-phenomenological by being responsive to the phenomenon (Hycner 1985) of sailing. Existential-phenomenology is a useful method for the research as it emphasizes the importance of individual's experiences (Thompson et al. 1989) and enables reconstructing the individual world of the informant's experience (Hycner 1985). Moreover, phenomenological approach deepens the understanding of immediate responses and helps make sense of the nature experiences of sailors rather than separating them from their background. Lived experiences can feature everyday encounters and behaviour that individuals face in their lives (Elliott and Wattanasuwan 2005). The study is further based on grounded theory: assuming the informants' views as facts, seeing what themes emerge from the data and how it appropriates to the existing theories (Goulding 2005).

Existential phenomenology has become more frequently used in consumer research studies (Thompson et al. 1989; Goulding 2005; Moisander et al. 2010). It has been especially useful in similar type of complex studies exploring consumers' lived experiences from an individual perspective (Thompson et al. 1989). It has also been successfully used previously in studies of ideologies (e.g. Thompson et al. 1989 Connolly and Prothero 2003; Cherrier 2008). However, according to Hycner (1989) the aim of existential phenomenology studies

is not to generalize the findings but trying to understand human phenomena of one or few individual's experiences. It is suitable for this particular study as it enables to understand the complex experiences of sailing and identifying experiential patterns in its lived experience.

The study's analysis follows the hermeneutic framework. The hermeneutic framework provides linkage to phenomenological aspects of the person-culture relationship. Thompson (1997) formed a coherent strategic process of how to interpret qualitative data. The framework is especially useful for the study as it is explicit framework for "interpreting the stories that consumers tell about their consumption experiences" (Thompson 1997). It describes consumption meanings in relation to consumers' historically established cultural meanings as well as their sense of personal history. In the framework the meaning of particular life events are formed around a person's life history that is contextualized within a complex background of cultural meaning and beliefs. The framework is especially useful for placing the consumer at the centre of the analysis and enabling the researcher to study the complexities between consumers' meaning-based relationships. (Thompson 1997). Consumers are perceived as self-narrators telling stories selectively highlighting particular aspects of one's experiences (Polkinghorne 1991). Therefore, the personalized meanings emerge from a dialogical relationship where the consumption experiences are influenced by consumers' broader life narrative (Thompson 1997).

### **3.2 Data collection method**

The interpretive and phenomenological approach emphasizes that the research is interactive and cooperative (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). Thus the basis of the study is in the in-depth existential-phenomenological interviews (Thompson et al. 1989). This type of interview is especially suited for this study as it is formed by only few pre-planned questions (Thompson 1997). The aim of the interviews was to have the informants describe their experiences of sailing the way they understand their acts and objects in the experiences (Moisander et al. 2010). The informants articulate their experiences of sailing through narratives (Wilson 2012) – stories of sailing. Narratives allow seeing the interviewees' identities not only as a list of attributes but also how they are linked to key experiences of sailing memories. It enables to connect identity from past, to present and imagined future (Ahuvia 2005).

I interviewed six informants using careful sampling with choosing participants that are living the sailing experience. The informants are well experienced sailors from different age

groups, both male and female. The interviews were in-depth long interviews. I kept the structure open asking only questions arising from the informants' narratives of which I wanted to have clarification or more information. Thus the interviews were more discussions in nature and left room for the interviewees to narrate and allowing the interviews to be cooperative (McCracken 1988). However, as suggested by Thompson et. al (1989; 1990; 2006), I had certain themes chosen beforehand from which I wanted to have more information. In that way they were able to keep the focus of the discussion on one's sailing experiences. I first let the conversation flow and if the themes were not touched on, I asked about them to have more in-depth understanding of experiencing nature through sailing. For example sustainability was left out from the interviews purposefully to see whether it emerges by itself. If it did not, I asked about the interviewees' opinion about the environmental issues at the Baltic Sea.

Before the interview the interviewees were given only brief information about it. They were told that the interview was about sailing and was part of Baltic Sea research. The interviews started by asking the interviewees to tell who they are letting the interviewees to get into mood of talking and relaxing the interview situation. Even though there wasn't any question of their sailing history, the interviewees started talking about their sailing hobby right away. The interviews continued there with natural follow-up questions about the meanings of the stories seeking to find out whether other persons had been involved, how the interviewees perceived the different sailing situations and how different events affected their sailing experiences. The interviewees were let to freely talk about their experiences. The interviews were conducted mainly in cafeterias (except for one what took place in the interviewee's home), as it was perceived as an easy and relaxing place to talk over coffee. The aim was to give the idea to the interviewees that they can talk freely about their experiences without having to have any formal expertise on sailing. The interviews lasted from around one hour to one and a half hours.

### **3.3 Interviewees**

The data was collected from six interviews from six different people. Three of them were females and three of them males. All of them were well experienced sailors belonging to some yacht club and sailing mainly in Baltic Sea. Their ages varied from 24 to 70. The informants were recruited by networking through friends and other informants acting as intermediaries in making contact to be able to get sailors from different backgrounds. The

interviewees were selected from Finnish sailors, as I wanted to hear narratives mainly from sailing in the Baltic Sea. They needed to be well experienced in order to be able to give versatile stories of sailing and having a strong connection to sailing. Next the interviewees are shortly presented in order to give the reader an idea of the interviewees' sailing background. The names of the interviewees have been changed to protect their privacy.

Mikko is a 24-year-old male from Helsinki whose father was an ambitious and talented race sailor who taught Mikko to sail. They have had always a cottage on an island in the Baltic Sea where they have had numerous different sailing boats. Mikko has been sailing with his family ever since he was born and he goes only cruising. Mikko went last summer to cross the Atlantic with a sailing boat. Nowadays he is also sailing alone at their cottage with a small Lazer boat.

Anni is a 24-year-old female from Espoo who started sailing with sea scouts when she was seven years old. At first, older scouts were teaching her to sail, but nowadays being a skipper she teaches smaller scouts. She has had her own small sailing boat with her brother for few years. Her whole family is also sailing and she has been doing trips with them too. She goes sailing every summer with her family and the scouts. She is also part of a student sailing club and has been the Chairman of it organizing numerous sailing trips to for example to the Mediterranean.

Keijo is a 33-year-old male from Helsinki who prefers race sailing to cruising. Sailing has been an important part of his life ever since he was born. His whole family and relatives are keen to sailing. They have had their own island in Baltic Sea where they have used to go ever since he was little. He takes part to sailing races with his yacht club team several times during summer. Nowadays he has also started to go cruising every now and then.

Tiitta is a 47-year-old female from Helsinki who has been sailing with her parents ever since she was born. She learned to sail on her own when she was five. Nowadays she sails mainly with her family each summer at their annual cruising trip. She is an active member of Women Sailors (Nairpurjehtijat) –club with whom she goes sailing once every summer. She has an own wooden sailing boat with what she goes mainly cruising but she also goes with other boats to races sometimes with the Women Sailors -team.

Jarmo is a 58-year-old male from Merikarhut yacht club. He is a retired sea captain from Helsinki and a boat and sailing enthusiast. He started sailing when he was little (around seven) at their cottage in the Baltic Sea. He has been sailing a lot with different boats both cruising as well as racing. He goes sailing both with his family, as well as by himself and with friends. He is sharing and having a common ownership with few sailing boats and goes cruising with his co-owners.

Kaisa is a 70-year-old female from Helsinki belonging to Merikarhut yacht club as well. She started sailing when she was around 40 years old. Already before starting to sail she had been spending a lot of time at the Baltic Sea at their cottage on an island there. She also drove motorboat many years before starting to sail and she had several own motorboats. Thus, the sea and seafaring has been in her life from the beginning. Kaisa goes sailing mainly by herself and has her own fibreglass sailing boat. She considers herself as a technologically driven boat enthusiast and has been working with boats too.

### **3.4 Data analysis method**

The analysis part of this research was complex and time-consuming process. My role as a researcher interpreting the text was to be open to the possible themes emerging from the text rather than using some predetermined meanings onto the data (Thompson et al. 1989). Furthermore, I had to believe the interviewees experienced the situations as they told and focus more on discovering the meanings behind those experiences. The purpose of existential-phenomenology is to be empirical with every interpretation supported by empirical evident of the consumers' lived experiences (Thompson et al. 1989). Thus, all the interpretations need to emerge from the consumer data not from theoretical assumptions.

The data analysis of the transcriptions followed loosely Thompson's (1997) process of interpreting textual data. That helped to interpret the interviewees' stories in relation to their narratives of self-identity as well as to a background of historically established cultural meanings. I started analyzing the interviews even before I had done all the interviews to get an overview of the possible themes and to see whether the type of interview was practically suited for the study. The transcription data of each interview i.e. the emic stories were read through many times in order to get a sense of whole. After reading the texts couple of times, the data was coded in themes emerging from the text. This emerged coding process aim was to find important themes, feelings, motivations, similarities, common expressions,

differences and causalities explaining the experiences. I placed different themes into excel sheet to gain better understanding of the similarities and differences between the themes.

After coding, each of the interview data were formed in a chronological life story to enable to see the important events and other people in the person's sailing experiences and to see how different events are part of the whole life story. Moreover, it was helpful in organizing the stories into coherent narrative of self-identity. I analyzed the plot structures of the interviews and the symbolic meaning behind the stories to get a more holistic understanding.

Lastly, I analyzed how the individual-level experiences were related to the broader cultural meanings. To get a better understanding of the socio-historic background I studied previous research literature of experiencing nature and sailing. Following Thompson (1997), the aim was to develop knowledge of the major social and historical themes that previous literature has come up with. After finding themes I tried recoding the data and finding similarities and differences.

After reading the narratives over and over it became clear that ideology of nature is complex and multilevel. Experiencing nature seems to go fine with the Semiotic Square model and thus I started searching for different ideologies behind sailing. Following the instructions of forming the Semiotic Square (Floch 1988; Kozinets 2008) the analysis began with central binary oppositions – finding two extreme ideologies that are in contrast to each other. Next I continued with finding ideologies that are negations of idealized solutions of the two oppositions. The negations are defined with finding the absence of the feature of the oppositions (Floch 1988). Then the relations between the ideologies and idealized solution were analysed and contradiction, contrarities and complementarities founded. Semiotic Square will be elaborated more thoroughly in the findings.



## 4 Findings

In this section the findings of the study are presented. The findings will be divided into two: first the ideologies behind the consumption that emerged from the data are explained and then the meaning of sailing is presented. The first part answers to the first sub-question and will go in depth to nature ideologies that influence sailors thought, speech and action. The empirical data from the analysis yielded different ideologies for which the consumption of nature occurs. The study frames these findings to a Semiotic Square analysis. The second part answers to the second sub-question of what are the meanings behind sailing consumption by explaining the synthesizing solution between the different ideologies.

The aim of the research is to explore how consumers experience nature through sailing consumption. To explore the experiences of nature we need to understand the relationship between nature and sailing consumption. Thus this section identifies what sailing consumption constitutes of and aims to understand the role of nature in it. Connolly and Prothero (2003) argue that the understanding of the meaning of consumption stems from consumer motives for consumption. Consumers produce meanings through their experiences (Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Therefore the analysis follows the interviewed sailors' experiences.

According to Barnett et al. (2005), it is not only important to understand how to change consumer's behaviour but more importantly we should understand the meanings, objectives and responsibilities underlying consumption. Material products such as a new fancy sailing boat cannot be seen to satisfy only basic needs. One does not need the boat to cross the sea at these days. Instead, the products can serve to enhance interpersonal interactions or senses of personal identity (et al. 2005). Therefore, rather than focusing on the visible attributes, the focus should be more on immaterial qualities (Levy 1995).

Moreover, as Bauman puts it:

“Consumption is not just a matter of satisfying material greed, of filling your stomach. It is a question of manipulating symbols for all sorts of purposes. On the level of the life-world, it is for the purpose of constructing identity, constructing self, and constructing relations with others. On the level of

society, it is in order to sustain the continuing existence of institutions, of groups, structures and things like that.” (cit. Kilbourne et al. 1997).

Thus, the products are not bought and consumed only for their functional benefits but for the symbolic meanings that they withhold. Following Bauman’s definition of consumption, the study attempts to find out the deeper symbolic meaning of sailing consumption. The relationship between sailors and nature is especially interesting. It is full of contradictions that enhance the sailing experience. The next part will go more in depth to the ideologies of nature that form the basis of the meaning behind sailing.

## **4.2 Semiotic square – The Ideological Constitution of Sailing**

*“Consumer ideology – systems of meaning that tend to channels and reproduce consumer’s thoughts and action”*  
*(Arnould and Thompson 2005)*

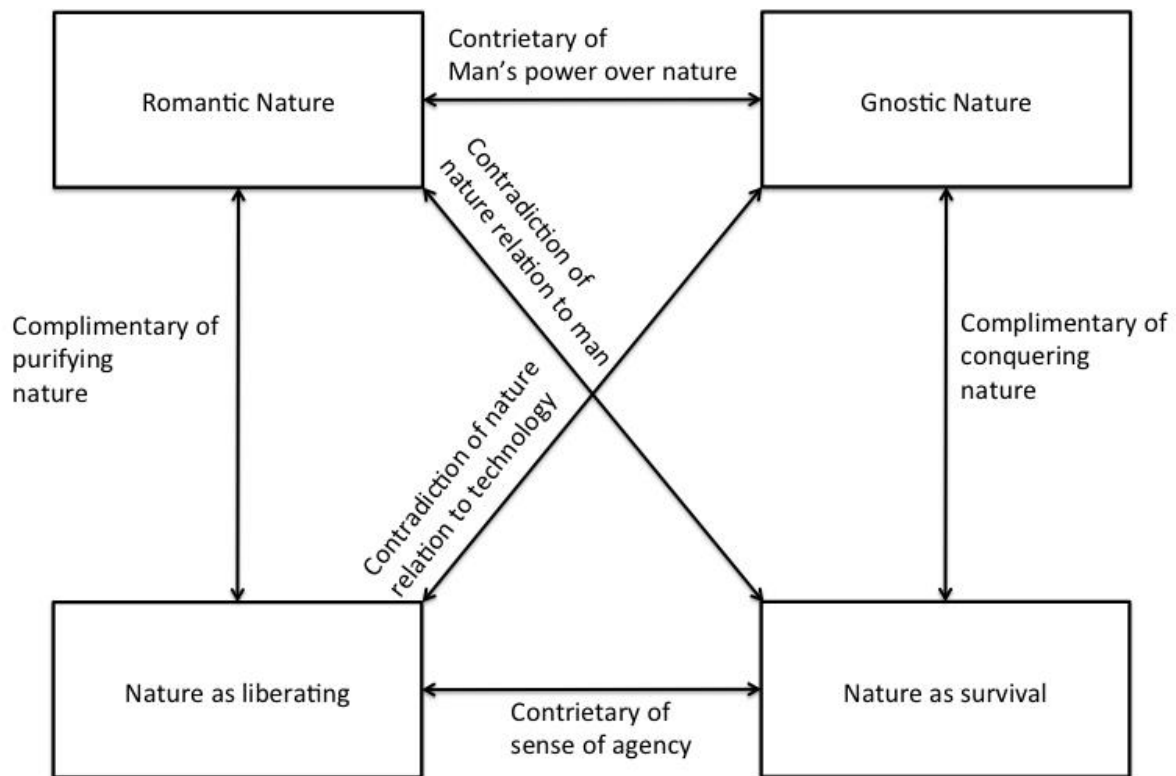
As we now understand the main meaning behind sailing consumption we can form a description of how consumers experience nature through sailing. As indicated in the previous section, meanings of nature are highly involved in constructing the meanings behind sailing. However, as is clear from the definitions of sailing consumption and previous research, numerous logical contradictions occur during experiences of nature. According to Thompson (1997), the stories of consumers are often expressions of personal meaning formed in complex social and historical relationships. He emphasizes the complex relationships between consumers’ consumption needs and self-expression. However even when consumption constructs can be full of internal contradiction, they still enable consumers to construct a sense of coherence (Thompson 1997). The contradictions between the elements are highly important for the ideology as they fulfil the experience of nature through sailing consumption. I present in this section the semiotic square analysis to form the relationship between the contradictions. The question answered here is what are the ideologies of nature underlying sailing experiences.

The Semiotic Square maps the different elements of nature ideology and forms a synthesis of relationships between paired concepts of four interacting elements. The experiences are filled with contradictions and the full experience of sailing comes with synthesizing these contradictions. According to the semiotic culture theory, culture is formed by collective representations forming the collective knowledge of society (Greimas 1987). Semiotic Square was founded by Algirdas Greimas in 1987 to analyze relationships between paired

concepts (Kozinets 2008). It is based on the idea that there is no meaning without relation and the language is a system of relations. In order to understand the system of relations one must consider the various types of differences creating the meaning. (Floch 1988). The aim of the square is to present a kind of synthesis where contraries and contradictions reach some ideal solution (Kozinets 2008). The semiotic square is formed around extreme ideologies to which the model aims at searching for idealized solutions that are compromises of the extreme ideologies. Therefore the model enables to research the grey areas between the extreme ideologies (Floch 1988). It is especially interesting to the study at hand as having the ability to organize a universe coherently.

Semiotic Square has been used previously in consumer research for example studying hypermarkets (Floch 1988), masculinity in consumption (Holt and Thompson 2004) and technology ideology (Kozinets 2008). It has proven to be useful in studying the dynamics of ideologies and consumer sense making (Kozinets 2008). It is a complex model presenting relations for underlying ideologies of sense making thus enabling to understand the deeper systems of major elements. The differences and contradiction between the ideologies create the meaning. (Floch 1988). The framework is useful for studying sailing experiences as the ideologies behind the experiences are contradicting but at the same time forming a coherent harmony together.

The Figure 1 represents a collective synthesis of the identified four nature ideologies. Even though previously briefly defined in the literature review the two extreme ideologies are redefined here according to how they showed up in the sailors' narratives.



**Figure 1. A Semiotic Square of nature ideologies**

Semiotic Square of nature ideologies in the study illustrates how sailors are able to move between the different ideologies during a sailing experience. It is to emphasize that there exists no pristine or single nature but instead, each experience can set forth a different kind of nature. It is formed by different ideologies between which sailors move back and forth. Some of the founded four ideologies of nature are contradictive but at the same time forming a coherent sense of nature to the sailors. The next chapters will first present the two extreme ideologies (Romantic and Gnostic) also founded in the previous research and explain the contrietary of man's power over nature between the extreme ideologies. Those are presented here as they showed up in the sailors' narratives. Then the study will focus more on the grey areas between the extreme ideologies – the idealized solutions: Liberating and Survival. It will define how the interviewees follow the ideologies and how they are complimentary to the extreme ideologies and explain the contrietary of sense of agency between them. Third, the study moves to explain how the extreme ideologies come together with the idealized solutions through contradiction of nature relation to technology and contradiction of nature relation to man. The summary will summarize and bring the analysis together.

#### 4.2.1 Romantic Ideology of nature

As mentioned in the literature review, previous consumer research has focused on the romantic experience of nature. The Romantic ideology of nature (henceforth “Romantic ideology”) showed to have impact to also sailing experiences. According to the narratives that also have to do with the previous research, the Romantic ideology in this study can be defined as follows: The purely romantic and ideal nature is untouched paradise where no man has interrupted the peaceful and pure environment. Nature is a maternal power healing and taking care of man. However, no man is able to reach this ideology because man is foreign to it. The actions of humans are destroying the purity of nature and destroying the extreme Romantic ideology. It can be pure only if it is untouched, wild and organic. Moreover, nature is sacred and not taken for granted. Thus the role of man in the romantic nature is difficult. How can one reach this romantic nature when one itself is the worst enemy of nature?

*Tiitta: We are only humans that visit the waves and the water is a big element. It is powerful and the wind and you have to respect the ocean. A lot of people all the way from ancient Greek time have tried to overcome the water but no one has ever succeeded in that and no one will ever conquer the sea. It is an important element.*

*Anni: It is somehow cool how man has been able to invent something (talks about scuba diving) with what we can go under the sea and see the world where man doesn't really belong.*

When the interviewees talked about nature they described it like a paradise. The above quotes from Tiitta's and Anni's narratives indicate how sailors honour nature and see themselves as outsiders. According to Tiitta “sailors are only visiting the nature”. This implicated the Romantic ideology where sailors are always outsiders to the sea. They can never enter the romantic sea completely. They cannot belong to it but they can visit the waves every now and then. She thinks the greatness of sailing is the possibility to get closer to the world of sea she does not belong to but that she would like to belong to. It is her way to construct a coherent sense of self.

Sailors' possession objects, such as sailing boat as the most important one, allow the sailors to convince themselves and others on who they are and enable to get closer of who they want to be. It is the visualisation and a concrete proof to a sailor of how he sees himself. At the same time, it is a way to express to others who he is. That is why sailors use a lot of time and money to acquire a sailing boat. They would not pick up just any boat but it needs to be in line with their identity. Indicated by the interviewees, a certain type of sailing boat such as a wooden boat represents a certain type of sailor. A wooden boat may symbolise for example for wooden boat owner Tiitta that grooming her boat is highly connected to her sailing experience as wooden boats tend to need more maintenance than for example fibre glass boats. Kaisa, on the other hand, is a good example of how getting a new sailing boat synchronises the different stages of sailing. She has a new boat at her sight almost all the time and once she has got better in sailing and felt that she could handle a bigger boat, she goes to buy a bigger one. In that way she was able to be closer to whom she wanted to be – a woman sailor that is independent of anyone else.

*Tiitta: Well we have had numerous amount od boats. When I was young we had wooden boats. Which names I don't know exactly. Different boat types.. we had those c types and "shark " boats and then well.. My dad bought a racing boat a Finn Express 23. It is extremely good to sail and it had a big cockpit and it is now mine. The boat. I have always thought of changing the boat but there is no boat as good as the one. Would be hard to find another one with a cockpit as good and that you could as well sail by yourself. It travels well, has a great hull.. The boat has been in 12 meters waves at the Baltic Sea while we were on our way to Oslo. It is extremely difficult to find a boat that travels as well and withstands the open sea and the archipelago at the same time. Of course I dream about such a boat. (..) but I want to be totally out of loans when I buy a new boat. But I'm going to get a new boat anyways.*

*Interviewer: You're going to keep the boat anyway?*

*Tiitta: Well I don't know. I couldn't sell my Rosita (the boat). There is this sort of something in it. It is not just the money but the boat is important for me.*

The above quote tells about Tiitta's connection to her boat. According to McCracken (1986), the possession rituals allow consumers to take possession of the meaning of a consumer good. Further, the acts of personalising the good are an attempt of transferring meaning from their personal world to the newly obtained goods. This was also applicable to sailing. The interviewees emphasized the bond they had with their boat and how they weren't willing to let go of their old boats because they had been grooming the boat themselves and transferred meanings to it. For example Tiitta was referring to her boat by its name "Rosita" and even when she described her dream boat very differently to what her current "Rosita" is, she said she could not sell her "Rosita". She has developed a strong bond with it and trusts on it after she has herself been grooming it countless times. Thus it is a meaningful part of her sailing identity.

Different practices are important in maintaining the romanticized view of nature. However, similar to how Canniford and Shankar (2012) brought out in the surfing study, various betrayals hinder the experience of romantic nature. Betrayals are such that threaten the pure experience of nature when consumption resources don't meet (Canniford and Shankar 2012). For example Kaisa explained how all of a sudden weather changed to a storm when they were sailing with her friend in the Denmark archipelago. In the middle of the night they had to wake up and start checking the ropes of their boat. They had been laughing to a weather forecast telling a storm was coming but when the storm finally hit the harbour it changed the entire situation. Kaisa said she loves sailing because of the peacefulness it brings. The experiences of storms like this are betrayals of geographies to match the desire of romantic nature. The betrayals are unacceptable and problematize the romantic experiences (Canniford and Shankar 2012).

*Keijo: Especially when at sailing everything can depend on the weather. It can be too windy or you might have to stay on an island for few days without moving a bit and then day by day you can make plans that after a week we go to Hanko and the boat will stay there. But you can't have more accurate plan of how fast you are going to sail when you can't know the winds beforehand.*

As Keijo above describes, the problematic betrayals of sailing need to be purified in order to maintain the romanticized view. The Romantic ideology shows itself to Keijo as a force beyond rational human control. He manages the betrayals with not making precise plans of

his journey but living in harmony with the nature waiting for a better condition for sailing. Purifying practices are helping consumers to keep the ideal of romantic nature as a pure zone. For example, similar to surfers (see Canniford and Shankar 2012), sailors have practical skills to match with suitable material geographies as well as technologies, such as reefing the sails according to wind and preferring wooden to fiberglass, to get the romantic experience of nature.

In addition sailors use romantic scripts of nature in order to enhance the ideal of romantic nature:

*Jarmo: We were sailing with my cousin the boat from Korppoo to Hanko and we sailed through the night and thought out loud how amazingly gorgeous it is to see the differences at the archipelago during different seasons, see the changes in lights and colours and all the different greens and so on..*

(..)

*Jarmo: I said these experiences (to a sailor he met on a harbour) from the previous night that have you ever thought of when you now sail, it is like you were walking in some kind of hermitage or Louvre or similar where all the most beautiful landscapes of sea painters had been collected to one place and after you can experience it your own when you sail through those sceneries. He said he had never thought of that and that it was greatly said. I think that is something what admires me at sailing. Last year I sailed quite a lot by myself and it was only the changing of the lights and colours and the scenery. So it is something that lasts to look at*

Jarmo described the extraordinariness of nature to another sailor. By using the metaphor of nature in relation to paintings he enhances the view of romantic nature to the other sailor as well as to himself. When he expresses his feeling out loud he is able to have the romantic experience of nature stronger in spite of possible betrayals in the future.

The Romantic ideology gives a special position to sailors within other seafarers. They take the subject position of being in response of the nature. Sailors want to protect the nature from harm. They see themselves as stewards of the ocean protecting it and being the first



ones to give an alarm when the conditions of the sea are bad. That was well indicated by Keijo:

*Keijo: Well I have the feeling that sailors are at the front line defending the state of the Baltic Sea and when you look at for example Facebook and those groups where they keep the discussion on going, you see they are all people who go sailing or spend time on the water a lot. I guess it is partly because you can see the changes so concretely and it is so much talked about during these days.*

(..)

*People are really careful so that they don't even throw the small pieces of electric tape to the water that is used for marking the spots to use at different part of the competition. There is a small piece of electric tape around a small rob and when you take it off you might think whether you throw it on the water or put it in a garbage. I would claim that most of the sailors put it in their pocket*

(..)

*It is like when you are going for scuba diving and you're not touching anything at the sea. Then again when you go snorkelling at a holiday, you can see at the Caribbean for example that people take some scallops or might break the coral.. So it is un-thoughtful compared to when you go in for something more and understand that if everyone was doing similar things there wouldn't be anything to see anymore.*

Modern technologies create stress and ecological degradation being harmful to human (Thompson 2004). Sailors are setting an example to other seafarers to be more sustainable. They aim at living in harmony with nature causing no harm to the environment. Even though these images of the pure and sacred nature tend to drive sailors to continuously leave the shore and go look for the undiscovered romantic nature, it is clear no such place exist to this extent. Thus the Romantic ideology is unrealistic and more a fictional desire.

#### 4.2.2 Gnostic Ideology of nature

Another extreme ideology - the Gnostic ideology of nature (henceforth “Gnostic ideology”), on the contrary is placing man in the centre. The core idea is that humanity is creating a paradise. The narratives emphasized the previously explained Gnostic ideology in the experiences of sailing. In this study, following the previous research, Gnostic ideology is explained as follows: There is no paradise without human intervention and thus man plays an active role in conquering nature. The ideology places technology in the very centre of the intervention. Nature is about to revenge and technology can be a liberator. For example Thompson’s (2004) study of natural health marketplace found that some consumers have routine purification practices (such as cleaning their body routinely from toxic) to liberate from the revenge of nature. Technological cleaning practices enable the consumers to live in harmony with Mother Nature (Thompson 2004). However, as became clear from the interviews the purely Gnostic nature is hard to reach. People cannot fully have the control over their environment, especially nature. It is unpredictable, strong and challenging. In addition, no one would in reality aim to experience the revenge of nature.

The sailors told they were looking for romantic experiences of nature when they went to sailing. For example Tiitta said that only “idiots leave the shore when it is stormy”:

*Tiitta: Only idiots leave the shore when it is stormy. You shouldn't leave when the wind is too harsh. You only end up in there by coincidence but you never leave to that sort of storm. You have to evaluate your skills and the most of the accidents happen only because people are stupid and inexperienced and they think they know how to handle things better than they actually do*

However, the most extensive stories the informants told were about the Gnostic conquering of nature – how they were able to conquer dangerous unforeseen situations with technology. With Gnostic technologies and practices of grooming the sailboat sailors prepare for the “revenge of nature” and conquer it. Thus sailors check the shrouds every time before leaving the shore and paint their boat once a year on average. A “true” sailor puts a lot of work in maintaining the boat making sure to be prepared for the unforeseeable nature. Therefore sailing never offers a simple pleasure but rather an existentially meaningful pleasure. Moreover, the unforeseeable weather condition such as storms created the magical experience of nature to the interviewed sailors.

The idea of the revenge of nature is nature eventually coming back at humans for causing harm to its sacred property where Gnostic technology can be a liberator of such revenge (Thompson 2004). The revenge of nature in sailing could be caused by unsustainable behaviour. Symbolically the climate change and nature disasters could be perceived as revenging nature. However, sailors can liberate themselves from the revenge with technology. For example, all of the interviewees emphasized that an experienced sailor would not go out to sea if the weather was too harsh. Reading weather forecasts carefully they are able to get free from the harsh weather conditions. In addition, experienced sailors know how to read clouds and changes in sea and sky telling whether a storm is coming and are able to behave accordingly. That enables sailors to conquer nature and dominate it when being well experienced.

*Keijo: When we go for training or competing, it is our own crew that goes through the boat and we do all the the possible thing to do or what is left there to do to maintain or groom or fix the boat. We have a standard team there and we have fared quite well. The guys at the fore do their part and the guys at the middle their. If some guys are not doing their own part, for example if a knot opens in a critical moment, they will hear so much about it that they will take care of it the next time. You will learn from your mistakes.*

Indicated by the above quote from Keijo's narrative, Gnostic ideology is part of every sailing experience. Even though Keijo is part of a yacht club and does not need to maintain the boats as much as if he owned an own boat he wants to spend much time in maintaining and preparing the boat. He emphasizes that every sailor needs to know the boat one is sailing. Thus he grooms the boat himself or he needs to trust on his co-sailors when not doing everything himself. That allows the sailors to have a control of the situation.

*Kaisa: To excel oneself by finding your way manually. We started to hear seagulls and sort of rumble and the sea sort of.. I knew there was an island and we wondered were we are going to end up in and then right ahead of us there raised the steep rocks of Bornholm, the kind of rough rocky shore.*

(..)

*For example at Merikarhut (the club) it is forbidden to go to a harbour under sails because it causes such a big danger. It doesn't work anymore with the big boats. But I think it works. I have gone to a harbour under sails.*

Following Keijo's arguments about having control over one's environment, Kaisa emphasizes that navigation plays a key role in conquering nature. It allowed her to find the destination when nature is revenging with a dense fog. The Gnostic ideology seems to be driving Kaisa when she uses technology as a rational tool for managing the boat. Kaisa honours true sailors who she considers to be the ones who can handle their sailboat. She admires technology - how it has made sailing easy and enables herself to sail alone.

Even though technology has an important part in sailor's nature experience, the interviewees separated themselves from motorboat cruisers. They argue that sailors are better at managing Gnostic technology in conquering nature. Keijo summarises the reasons why sailors see motorboat cruisers different from sailors:

*Keijo: To go to a natural harbour it requires more talent. You can't go there just like that by going and buying a fancy and expensive motorboat. Everyone can turn on the navigator and go to Hanko and like drive there and the harbour guard can like park the boat for you, but at the natural harbours you must know the right tracks and how to drive inside of the harbour. That makes sailors more talented and experiences. It is the right kind of spirit.*

According to Keijo, sailors have more talent in managing the Gnostic technology. Therefore sailors are able to conquer nature better than motor boaters making sailing culture stronger and closer to the nature. Sailing is about learning to navigate and manage the boat and the Gnostic technology reached by only well-experienced sailors. One cannot buy the talent and to experience the nature in full if one does not have the ability to have the control over Gnostic technology of nature.

Multiple possession rituals exist in especially sailing boat maintenance. Through the rituals sailors impose their extended self to their surroundings. They for example claim the boat as their own and part of their self. Usually a lot of time is spent on the boat and a lot of memories are created. It creates a strong bond to the boat as a consumption object. The interviewees emphasized that they wanted to maintain the boat by themselves and that way

get a personal mark on it. The boat needs a lot of grooming and maintenance as well as studying how it works. The grooming rituals such as painting the boat every spring and cleaning it up after each sailing trip allow the sailors to claim the possession (the boat) their own. Further, the ritual deepens relationship to the boat more than just formal ownership.

Gnostic ideology is offering a full experience of nature and is highly important for the interviewees. However, as the examples show, it is not fully reachable. No one can have a full control over one's environment and it would be naïve to think so. Even though sailors are searching for way to control nature and prepare for its revenge, they know it will never happen entirely. One can maintain the illusions of having a control of one's environment by preparing for the revenge of nature. Thus, even though Gnostic ideology is driving sailing experiences, it does not exist in its previously defined "pure" form.

#### **4.2.3 Contrietary of man's power over nature**

As can be seen from the Semiotic Square, the two extreme ideologies - Romantic and Gnostic ideologies are contrietary of man's power over nature. Romantic nature ideology sees man foreign to nature and nature as an untouched paradise where no one can enter. Gnostic nature ideology instead sees man as an active conqueror creating paradise with the Gnostic technology. Moreover, the former sees man as passive having no power over nature and the experiences created by the outside nature whereas the latter sees man as active creator of the full experience of nature. Thus these ideologies are contrietary of man's power over nature. Many examples of such contrietary could be found from the interviewees' narratives.

*Tiitta: I'm shocked that people want to have electricity at the natural harbours and that someone has to take care of the things for you. I think it is ridiculous. You don't need those at the boat. People have started to have way too much equipment at the boats. That you must have hot water and everything else possible and it needs huge amounts of energy and it is highly un-ecological. I think at the boat there needs to smell a little the boat and the diesel motor and diesel itself. And there can be a little damp but it doesn't matter. It is warm and when you turn on the machine it will remove the damp and dry everything out. I don't want any televisions in my boat. The radio is enough. And I anyways have the ipad and we have solar panel with what we take extra*

*energy but I don't want any hot water. If I need hot water, I will cook it with the gas stove.*

(..)

*When you go to the natural harbour and eat simple food that you have fished yourself and go pick some berries and mushrooms and prepare them yourself and make sure you won't throw anything extra on the water that doesn't belong there*

The quote from Tiitta's narrative shows the inner contradictions of Gnostic and Romantic ideologies of nature. For her going to sailing means being close to nature and going away from crowds. It is her place to relax and enjoy the beautiful sceneries. The resistance of too much technology in the boat accords well with the Romantic ideology. The best sailing experience to her is created with as little technology as possible. However, she does not want to go completely away from modern life. She wants to listen to radio and use her ipad to be connected to the world outside sailing. In addition, the smell of diesel is very important for her sailing experience. Thus the Gnostic ideology represents her need for having control over her environment (knowing where she is located and be fully notified what happens around her) and the feeling of being able to prepare for the revenge of nature (smelling the diesel).

*Kaisa: Peace. When it is not too windy out there. I like decent winds. It is the unbelievable peace that gets me there. Especially when you're able to just sail, without the engines.*

*Interviewer: What is it that peace gives to you?*

*Kaisa: Peacefulness. When the life is what it is. There you have no rush. You don't have think about absolutely anything. Especially when it is warm and beautiful, it is wonderful. But wind is not wonderful.*

Another good example of the contradictions between Romantic and Gnostic ideologies is Kaisa's experience shown above. Especially it shows how sailing consumption can

harmonize the inner contradictions of Gnostic and Romantic ideologies. In general, Kaisa is highly driven by the Gnostic ideology. She admires the Gnostic technologies and grooming the boat. She has been working with technology and with boat technology to be precise. The background in technology makes Kaisa trust on herself as a sailor. She had a motorboat for more than 20 years with which she cruised around Baltic Sea and wanted to have always the biggest and best one. However, when mentioning the motorboat she seems a bit ashamed. It indicates the inner contradiction she has on motor boating. She is aware of sailors distinguishing themselves from motorboat drivers and thus does not want to emphasize her background even when she admires motorboats to some extent. Opposite to her background at technology Kaisa told nature appears to her most purely with Romantic ideology of decent winds and sunny days. She emphasized how she enjoys the peacefulness of the sea and uses the engines as little as she can. No technology is needed to create the pleasurable experience of sailing to her and she seeks for a peaceful experience. It follows the Romantic ideology of pure untouched nature as a paradise.

An illustrative example is Kaisa using Gnostic technology to conquer nature in a Baltic round sailing race. It was the most extensive story Kaisa told proudly and seemed to remember every little detail of. The memory seemed to have a huge impact on how she perceives nature during sailing experience. She was taking part in a sailing race with a group of women. The weather forecast told sailors should not go out to sea because a huge storm was coming. Nevertheless, the team left defying nature and the forecast. When they ended up in the middle of the storm they faced the challenging and hardy nature.

*Kaisa: Well I went early in the morning to fix the navigation stuff to the boat. At those days there wasn't any gps but only a dysfunctional deck navigator with what you could never know whether it was working or not. So I went to take care of it to the boat and I happened to see Expressen (the newspaper) telling that sailors shouldn't go out to sea. In Swedish of course. That a big storm was coming. I told the news to the girls (with whom she was sailing) when they came to the boat and I was tightening the pontoons with a metre long screwdriver to keep the boat in shape and the girls were laughing at me. I just told them that this is the situation, what should we do? They said we should leave to the sea of course. Well okay, so we left and the sea was calm once again, there was nothing to worry about, we were smiling and laughing*

*how there was no sign of a storm. But we didn't reach far before the storm so suddenly rose that reef after reef, when we took one reef off we had to start taking another one and yet a third one and we took the mainsail down and fiiiit (makes a voice).. and the small deck and the north wind that was just and just able to blow to a bad tack angle of the Trimaran. It was good that we didn't end up in the Soviet Union to Hiidenranta. It (the wind) was harsh and it became harder and harder and the night came and we had only a small sail a size of a small tissue up with what we were sailing and it was a battle of life and death*

Kaisa had been preparing for the storm with Gnostic technology by making sure all shrouds were tight and was tightening the pontoons before leaving the shore. This illustrates how she aims to be an active conquer of the sea defying the power of nature. She wanted to have the control in the possibly coming storm. Thus, sailing consumption is balancing Kaisa's aim to encounter the Gnostic ideology of overcoming nature with technology at the same time as living in harmony with the Romantic ideology as a purifying paradise. The hardy nature allows her to use Gnostic technology without her needing to feel embarrassed. Instead, she can feel proud of her technological skills when checking the premises before leaving the shore and thus saving her co-sailors. Therefore, even though driven by the Romantic image, the sailing experiences (especially the described type of storm experiences) allow her to follow the Gnostic ideology that she is very much driven in general. It also shows how she is able to move between Gnostic and Romantic ideology within one experience. That is also extremely clearly explained in Jarmo's story:

*Jarmo: I looked that an insanely weather is coming. A thunderstorm was coming from Estonia. I was looking that it is coming at us real fast even when I had been standing thousands of hours on a ship's bridge and still I had never seen that a storm is coming with such a velocity. So I laid down the big sail and finally I even laid down the foresail and finally the storm hit and the boat was cruising 8 knots without a single sail. The wind was blowing so hard to the boat hull and I couldn't see even 20 metres forward. It was good that I even could see on the foredeck. It was raining with cats and dogs but it was gone after 20 minutes*



(..)

*After that let say, that was the moment after which I learned to like trust on myself like so much that whatever circumstances I will end up, I can react and do right decisions. It was like a moment that changed my relationship to the sea and to sailing. I was sort of... Like I have always sort of stood in awe of sea and lets say from then on I feared a little less and the respect rose a bit.*

The above quote is from Jarmo's narrative indicating his movement between Romantic and Gnostic ideologies. Jarmo had been spending thousands of hours at the ocean and has the honouring Romantic ideology. He respects nature and aims to treat it accordingly. The sea is sacred and honoured – the most honoured element for him. However, the story above indicates the contradictive ideology of Gnostic nature. The described tasks such as laying down the mainsail and foresail were tasks to prepare for the revenge of nature. Nature is revenging because the sailors have entered the sacred place of nature. The experience of storm helped Jarmo to be on the first-name basis with nature and made him fear less the sea - having more full experience of sailing. Thus both extreme ideologies are important to him and the movement between the contritery ideologies allow him to feel at one with nature.

As mentioned, the previously explained two ideologies of nature are extreme ideologies that cannot be fully adhered to. Even though sailors admire the sea because of the Romantic side of it and want to experience it on their own, they can never fully reach the nature that follows the Romantic ideology. It is out of their reach because they themselves are disturbing the fully Romantic ideology. Also to be the "Robinson Crusoe" on a desert island fully at the mercy of natural forces can be far away from Romantic idea. Furthermore, even though in theory the Gnostic ideology allows the sailors to have a full experience of nature and they aim to have a control of the situation, the full Gnostic experience is unreal. Even when we often say we are braving the elements, the natural forces are never fully harnessed. It is more the sense of having control. Therefore other ideologies – the grey areas between the extreme ideologies, are needed to enrich and expand the basic relationship between Romantic and Gnostic ideology, which are not strong enough by themselves. The idealized solutions are contradictions having the absence of the feature of the extreme ideologies (Kozinets 2008). Most consumption happens in the idealized solutions. Next chapters will go through these grey areas between the extreme ideologies.

#### 4.2.4 Nature as Survival ideology

This chapter will briefly explain the idealized solution of nature as Survival ideology and explains how it is complimentary of conquering nature with Gnostic ideology. The non-Romantic contradictive to romantic ideology and the complimentary ideology with Gnostic ideology found from the sailing narratives is the ideology of nature as Survival (henceforth “Survival ideology”). According to the ideology, nature is not a maternal power protecting man but rather an challenging and extreme environment. With extreme environment the study refers to nature as dangerous and unforeseeable. Survival ideology follows the idea where nature brings anxiety and is a place to test oneself. These experiences enable consumer’s perception of self-improvement and help to cope with everyday life. They bring nature closer to the consumer and make them feel “at one” with nature. Nature is constantly testing man’s survival skills. It can be stressful for man (Tumbat and Belk 1993).

Somewhat surprisingly, none of the interviewees told they were really afraid of sea. All of them had been in a storm and in a somewhat dangerous situation. They had been nervous but emphasized that there is nothing to be afraid of at sea. On the contrary, the interviewees emphasized that storms were creating the magical touch of nature and fulfilling the experience. Therefore, as briefly touched by Gnostic ideology of nature, even though sailors don’t search for storms, they are an important part of the full experience of nature.

*Tiitta: I don’t know, I’m not really afraid of it (the sea). There is just that now the thing has to be handled and I was just thinking that oh well this situation has to be handled. You can’t really start thinking over things to be afraid of but there is actually nothing to be afraid.*

(..)

*That we were going slowly around one day later so I knew it was 33 metres the wind. So we were only nervous and we were just getting a grip of ourselves from minute to minute and everyone was doing really well. No one was annoyed or yelling or anything. No one said out loud that this would be our last trip. Even though I’m sure everyone was thinking of it. And I was thinking that the life raft was on the side of the boat fastened with a net and I thought that if this thing (the boat) will fall down, the life raft would stay beneath the*

*boat. It is of no use. Moreover, the waves at the kind of situation are horrible. You can't do absolutely anything. We could only wait and see from minute to minute what is going to happen and we did everything we could*

As became evident from the interviews and is indicated here at Kaisa's description, the feeling of fear is absent from sailing experience because sailors trust each other and especially their boats. Even though Kaisa was in dangerous storm of 33 metres wind she said she wasn't afraid. Instead, she talked extensively of her friends with whom she was sailing who were being calm and not panicking at the situation. All of them were experienced sailors and knew the boat and trusted on it. Thus, the ideology of nature as survival emphasizes the social role of sailors at the boat. As previously explained, others are highly important to the sailing experience. Following the meanings of sailing consumption, showing in Kaisa's comments, trust to others is highly important to the Survival ideology. In order to be able to encounter the challenging and harsh nature one has to be able to trust others.

The sailing boat plays an important role in the Survival ideology as well. That also indicates the necessity of technology to the ideology. One is not able to confront the challenging nature without technology. To be able to know the boat and to trust it allows having the full feeling of nature as survival. Kaisa's explanation shows how the trust on her boat helps her to manage the unforeseeable storm. When nature is testing sailors' survival skills, the boat enables them to conquer the nature. Thus grooming and maintaining the boat is an important task. It helps sailors to get to know their boat better and to create meaningful trust relationships to others. When sailors maintain the boat together they enhance their cooperation and develop deeper relationship as became evident from the social meanings of sailing.

*Jarmo: I think the attitude has to be awe or rather respect and then common sense. That if you go boating and especially sailing, it needs some basic ability. That you have to know some things and it shouldn't be a status thing that I have to have it because my neighbour has it. It has to start from a will and that you are ready to accept that it needs time to come first name basis with sea. If I started when I was six years old and right when I was 32 I felt like I was on the first name basis with the sea, I had been travelling the seas*

*and also travelled at sea for living and still it took 25 years to get the feeling that I can handle it. The element and I are on the first name basis. I look at the sea respecting it and I think you have to be humble when you sail and spend time at the nature in general. If you go there to “bang braces” it can come out badly. In my opinion for example when I have been in these sailing trips with young and also heard how young from precariat class or marginalized or young with some sort of behavioural difficulties or with seminal background have found themselves through sailing. Because at the sailing boat everyone has to deal with their own part and it can be an excellent place to many to have mental growing place that you learn by doing and you are always on charge of your own duties and you realize that the totality is build from everyone’s duties*

Jarmo emphasizes the challenging side of nature. According to him one must honour nature and sea and be humble. That is what makes the sailing experience so meaningful. No one should go out to sea if one does not have the respect over nature and does not understand the dangers of the sea. When you go sailing you need to take responsibility of your actions because they influence others and the entire experience. If one does not take responsibility, they are not able to encounter the nature according with Survival ideology. One must understand this non-maternal side of nature in order to have satisfactory experience of sailing.

The challenging side of nature also brings out the identity construction. Such as Jarmo above mentions, the feeling of personal growth and self-improvement follows the nature as survival ideology. Sailors are able to develop themselves through sailing consumption especially in the hardy wind when the nature is testing the sailors. It enables individuals to get closer to the fearless personas they want to be when they leave the shore threatening their fate with the unforeseen nature.

Indicated by the interview data, sailing consumption is usually experienced with others. Social roles are part of self-concept when they act as identity symbols through which people are creating an understanding of themselves and communicating about it to others (Schouten 1991). The social aspects of sailing act as techniques to avoid the wrath of nature.

*Mikko: Well every evening when I make a tea I sort of fly (snaps his fingers) about ten years back to a point where we have come to some natural harbour just our own family and placed the anchor there and went to the shore. My brother was a real camping person back in those days and he wanted always at natural harbours to make a fire at the shore. So he went straight away to make the fire and my mom started cooking and dad I donno whether he was reading a book or looking after us. We were three brothers and we were playing there and eating something at the beach. There was the silence and you are the only boat there maybe at the whole island and the amazingly beautiful sunset and the silence with only the voices of nature and we made some tea and always played cards. It has stayed in my mind very well and then every time I make tea it reminds me of the situation and is the reason why I like to drink tea*

Mikko's story above presents how there are certain social factors, motivations, situations or impulses that spur people to go sailing and influence the sailing consumption. Sailing is a social process where you develop yourself in relation to others, learn from others and teach others. Everyone has their own place in the boat and communicates one's identity through the role. Similar to what Arnould and Price (1993) found in their river rafting contexts the interviewees of this study have an evolving feeling of communion with friends and family while sailing. When asked about the best experience when sailing, Mikko describes the above story of a summer evening with his family in an island – how it affected him and made him feel united with his family. It is only one example of Mikko's narrative where he is emphasizing the role of others in his sailing consumption. It is an activity he does together with his family to deepen the relationship with them. It enables him to feel belonging together with his family.

“The right kind of” sailing companion is extremely important to the interviewees. Not everyone is accepted to be one's sailing companion. The boat is small and the atmosphere so intensive that no arguments are sought after and all the participants need to be cooperative. For example Kaisa is usually sailing alone even when she perceives it tough and tiring because she does not want anyone else to disturb her sailing rituals. On the contrary, Mikko's story previously presented how others enhance the sailing experience. The right kind of companion would be someone trustworthy who shares the same sailing ideology.

For example Mikko mentioned how he likes to go sailing with his brother and father who are experienced sailors and whom he knows he can trust while sailing.

On the contrary, going to sail with bad company can even ruin a sailing experience. That is well presented in Keijo's narrative:

*Keijo: In a competition, it is important that they (other teammates) know a lot about sailing and they know and the better skills the better. It is of course important what is everyone's role there and who does what but it's not as important somehow as it is even more important while cruising. When you think how the space there is as small as this area around us (points at the small corner at the cafeteria). When you're there a week it is important to come along well and that everyone is dealing stuff on their own part whether it was cooking or whatever. It is like in general when travelling that the companion needs to be laid back and not high maintenance type. Especially when everything in sailing depends on weather*

(..)

*When you're not on your very best there and you don't deal with the preparations well enough and then you leave... competitions basically goes like that we first sail upwind and then downwind and again upwind and downwind. And then at the first upwind we pulled the balloon sail up and one of the knots opened that pulls the sail up. So during the whole competition we basically couldn't get the sail up and you can't fare without it. He heard so much about the coincidence that I don't know whether he is going to come along again with us*

Keijo describes the meaning of well-suited companion for sailing. Everyone has a role in the boat and needs to behave accordingly. If one fails to behave according to his or her role, the whole experience of sailing can be ruined from others, or in the worst case even put others in danger. Such social tensions as Keijo here describes can appear when the roles are not clear for all. Some roles can be higher than others. For example having the skipper's role can create social status. The interviewees also told about sailing heroes who have managed to conquer drastic storms and who they therefore honour.

Sailing can also create and enhance old friendships. For example Jarmo is a co-owner of two boats. Some of the group members were unknown to Jarmo before getting the boat. They have been grooming the boat together and went sailing together making them friends. In addition, he has become closer with his previously known friends while grooming the boats and sailing together. He even told that the longest friendships he has had have been with his sailing friends.

As was seen from the description, nature as survival is more reachable than Gnostic nature. The Survival ideology does not follow the idea of man entirely having the control over one's environment. Rather it emphasizes the hardy side of nature – how sailing experience can turn into survival challenge because of its unpredictability. Moreover, instead of considering nature as revenging such as according to Gnostic ideology, Survival ideology sees nature hardy and challenging as it naturally is. Thus Survival ideology is complimentary of conquering nature. Gnostic and Survival are both concentrating on the experiences of human ability to conquer nature. Extreme brings the fulfilment of being able to conquer nature even when it is challenging without emphasizing the surreal full control over environment.

#### **4.2.5 Nature as Liberating ideology**

Following the previous chapter, this one described the idealized solution of nature as Liberating ideology (henceforth “Liberating ideology” and explains how it is complimentary of purifying nature with the Romantic ideology. The non-Gnostic contradiction to Gnostic ideology is nature as liberating. I present the idealized solution of nature as a liberator from technology and society. Technology of modern life, our cell phones, computers etc. (even when helping us and enhancing self improvement) can cause stress and pollution. The Liberating ideology considers technology harmful as it causes harm to man and nature. However it doesn't discard the technologies of sailing, but sees them different to the technologies that disturb experiencing nature (technologies of modern life). Thus, nature is presented a liberating power from the hectic life. Without technology one can feel free to do whatever one wants as well as feel peaceful. However, the ideology does not mean liberating from culture. Nature is not an isolated place from culture (Arnould and Price 1993) but instead consumers experience the liberating nature from a cultural viewpoint with a social group. Sailing offers a way to reach and experience nature without disturbing it – to be on the first-name terms with nature.

Sailing consumption also stabilises the self, especially when considering the possibility to be close to nature while sailing. Especially, the technologies of sailing such as sailing techniques and social relationships of sailing such as sailing roles, allow concentrating on sailing and let free of everyday stress. For example, the interviewees emphasized that true sailors go to natural harbours. The reason was commonly because it allows to be alone with one's sailing companion and moreover to go to a peaceful place and to be closer to the nature. It enables to forget the stress of everyday life and get away from society for a while. While sailing, one needs to fully focus on managing the boat and assessing the surrounding nature. Especially at natural harbours one needs to be more careful where to go ashore. Thus sailing can be a stress management tool used to harmonise mind.

*Anni: Maybe the ground of everything is still learning by yourself and teaching other and well.. Sharing the happy message of sailing and how cool it is.*

*Interviewer: What makes sailing so cool?*

*Anni: That is something I've been thinking a lot. It is somehow sort of.. It has always been somehow so amazing how the wind is moving the big boat and how it is even possible to work that way and somehow sea has always been really important to me even when we had never had a boat on ourselves. My dad has been at the navy and travelled through all the seas around the world. I don't know what it is but it comes from there. I just think it is so cool to leave first with the engines on from the shore and then set the sails and turn off the engine and just go with the wind*

Anni ponders the reasons what makes sailing “so cool” for her. Her description of turning off the engine is a symbol of letting loose from her routine life and getting closer to nature. By sailing with the help of wind only and with the feeling of being without any technology she enters the nature as liberating. She does not have to think about the responsibilities waiting for her at the shore but she can concentrate entirely on the sailing experience. The same feelings were expressed in Mikko's and Jarmo's narratives too. They told it is characteristic for them to be restless and only when they go sailing they are able to feel peaceful and relaxed. The weather is constantly changing and they need to read the nature in order to manage the boat. Only then can they fully concentrate on the moment when they



sail. These examples indicate how nature is helping the sailors to get out of their everyday stress and concentrate on the moment.

The Liberating ideology emphasizes experiencing nature without disturbing it. The paradise that was mentioned when describing Romantic ideology is reached according to Liberating ideology when the sailors are liberated from their stress and they feel free. The interviewees talked about the ecological behaviour at the sea. Canniford and Shankar (2012) talk about technologies that disturb the primitive fantasies with modifying geographic nature. That is well explained by Jarmo:

*Jarmo: During the past five years I have had to explain in plain when we bought a septic tank emptying station to the Hakaniemi sailing club when the head of Helsinki environmental issues told that between Inkoo and Loviisa there is a need for about 200 septic tank emptying stations so that all the boaters waste could fit in them. That every time a tank is full you wouldn't have to sail for five hour just to empty your tank. It is the same when the gas stations would be so rare that you had to think carefully where you could get gas and where not. And then there are the paint issues. Well I have myself during the last ten years started to paint my boat more rarely. I use it (the paint) every fourth year and other years just activate the boat hull by washing it thoroughly with water and sand down it so that nothing has ever grown at the hull of the boat. You can tell whether the boat is used or not. If it just stands in a harbour, of course the barnacles and others will get attached to it but if it's all the time on the move, nothing can catch it. They come at the harbours. I think single boater know well the situation but they don't know how every single sailor could affect on it*

Jarmo is annoyed with the fact that sailors don't have enough knowledge and care for the environment. To him the Liberating ideology shows in minimizing the influences to the surrounding environment. By contributing in protecting the sea, he is able to live according to the Liberating ideology. According to him, when true sailors use their boats regularly they are minimizing harm to the environment. The boat is meant to move and to be maintained regularly. Further, when the boat is well maintained before leaving to sea, one can feel free and peaceful while at sea. Thus maintaining of boat beforehand is highlighted also in this

ideology but the role of maintaining is somewhat different compared to other ideologies. The Gnostic and Survival ideologies emphasize maintaining the boat to be able to conquer nature. The Liberating ideology instead sees maintaining the boat in a way to cause least harm to nature and to be able to fully enjoy the experience. Maintenance is liberating them from the challenging nature.

The Liberating ideology follows the idea of getting free from the modern life and structures.

*Mikko: If we talk about certain human type, then maybe there are certain “vesser vissers” that think they know everything and in practice they know nothing. They are unskilful to handle the boat. Sometimes you meet them at big harbours and you realize oh boy those don’t know a heck about sailing and that is going dreadfully. And you have to be afraid for your own boat. Maybe those are the most annoying ones that you can meet while sailing. When at the sea or at the archipelago you meet someone, it is easy to sort of ignore them and not to see them because you can sort of shut yourself at your boat or then the archipelago or the sea is so vast that you can sort of run away from them if you know the right places. That’s is maybe one reason why we liked to go to natural harbours. That we could just stay with our own family and we didn’t have to listen to any annoying jokes or anything*

The quote above from Mikko’s narrative illustrates how sailing allows to move away from surrounding environment and to shut oneself away in the boat. There he can be with her own sailing companion without having anyone else to disturb his experience. Sailing can thus allow to move away from the outside expectation and structures and getting the feeling of liberation from society. As mentioned, the Liberating ideology does not mean liberation from culture. That is also well expressed in Mikko’s narrative when he emphasizes the importance of his family’s companion while going to natural harbours. His family is affecting in forming his experiencing.

The interviewees discussed largely how sailing enabled to test one’s limits and have a better self-esteem. They told that when they were able to overcome their fears while sailing, it made them feel better about themselves. Especially at the storms, the feeling of controlling the boat makes them more confident about themselves not only while sailing but also outside of sailing. In addition, all the women sailors told that having a control of the boat

makes them feel equal with men. Sailing has helped them to prove they are able to be equal and talented to handle the boat when the common view is that only men can handle it. This follows the Liberating ideology of liberating oneself of the social structures. The women sailors were able to have a feeling of agency while sailing.

Liberating ideology gives a more realistic view of nature than Romantic ideology. It allows sailors to enter nature with technology whereas Romantic ideology discards the existence of technology while sailing. Romantic and Liberating ideologies are complimentary of purifying nature as they both emphasize the possibility of nature to have a purifying effect on the sailors. The sailing experiences are purifying because experiencing nature while sailing allows forgetting responsibilities set by society. Thus Liberating ideology brings romantic nature closer by helping the sailors to have a feeling of getting closer to the paradise. The sailors aim to get closer to Romantic ideology by liberating nature ideology and un-attaching from their everyday routines and surrendering to be adrift.

#### **4.2.6 Contrietary of agency**

*“It is not a talent to know how to sail in harsh weather, it is a talent to sail in a light weather so that you get the boat to move” – Tiitta*

The Survival and Liberating ideologies are contrietary in the sense of agency. Following the liberating side of nature, sailors have a feeling of having agency on nature when they choose to separate from the undesired social shaping and feel liberated from society. Using as little technology as they can with following liberating ideology, sailors separate from social norms. They take a step back from the civilized society they live in. The sailors step into the world of nature as benevolent mother far away from modernity. On the other hand, the Survival ideology decreases the feeling of agency by enhancing the feeling of being a small human being at the mercy of nature. Following the ideology, sailors have a sense of not being able to have agency. The sea needs to be honoured and sailors should be humble and play along with what the nature brings. Sailors are acting according to how they are expected to act while sailing. Thus the feeling of agency I discarded when it could be fraught feeling in a survival situation.

*Interviewer: What is that you enjoy about nature?*

*Anni: That it is nature. That it is not city. That you don't have to think of anything at the city. It starts from there.*

*Interviewer: What kind of things at the city you don't want to think of?*

*Anni: well school and work and responsibilities. And there you have your own responsibilities when you go sailing. Responsibilities when you are the skipper. Well it is the freedom and you see how the world works.*

The above quote from Anni's narrative accords extremely well with the Liberating ideology. Anni enjoys nature because it brings freedom to her. With the Liberating ideology she can have the sense of agency of deliberating herself from the everyday life responsibilities. Another example showing the sense of agency in her experiences is the previously shown example of the symbolic act of turning off the engine and not following the modern society. She can go back in time and feel the nature just like the ancient sailors did. The feeling of agency enables her to enjoy the experience and get closer to nature. However, moving between ideologies, she is very much driven by how she is taught. She likes to teach others and wants things to be done in the way they have been taught. She is constantly developing herself and is driven by sailing community's agreements and structures.

Tiitta's comment on sailing courses is another good example of how marketplace culture affects sailors and discards the sense of agency.

*Tiitta: There at the kind of storm you can do nothing else but shut the hatches and when the boat rolls over you are still in safe there when you are at the sea you have to trust that. If you are afraid of being at the storm you shouldn't leave the shore at all. It is windy at sea sometimes.*

(..)

*At a harsh weather the boat moves always but you have to understand what it means if there is dust or anything like that. You have to know how to handle the boat and the sails and you have to know your limits. There is going to be no accidents because as a captain you are always in charge of everything, the whole crew and your boat and you are also in charge that nothing will happen*

*to others. I think it is unbelievable that some don't know how to use the fuel tank or if someone doesn't understand how the engine starts running or something like that. You have to understand what it means when it is 20 metres of wind and you break the sail that there are these stupid accidents. Or then you are in a dust and you get drift on a shipping channel. That is the number one thing not to do and you are a complete idiot if you end up doing that.*

Tiitta feels strongly about Survival ideology in acting according to how she has been taught. She emphasized how sailors should not fear the sea. One should not go out to sea if one does not know how to behave there. She even argues that it is foolish to get into trouble at the ocean. Accidents are usually sailors own fault. Her indignant comments about the sailors who don't know how to sail and interrupt her sailing experience are examples of how she is affected by marketplace culture.

Moving between ideologies, Tiitta also emphasizes her sense of agency while sailing. She is not following the gender roles, as she is a strong supporter of women sailors. She wants to break the sailing culture where men are ruling and controlling and create a new one where men and women are equal sailors:

*Tiitta: I think it is safety insurance for every man sailing that he has a wife that also knows how to sail and they teach the woman to sail too. That they let the woman to navigate the boat too. I see too much of those families where the woman only secures the fore rob and doesn't know a thing about sailing. What if the man falls of the boat? Are you going to stay at the boat alone and just look? I think it is just childish from couples if they don't sail both.*

Following Liberating ideology Tiitta emphasizes how in a storm she is having a sense of agency when she is not playing along the cultural norms but acting independently. She feels that she is not expected to know how to sail according to her social background. Thus she is sensing to have an agency while rejecting the social expectations.

Next the analysis will move into explaining the contradictions between the two extreme ideologies and the idealized solutions. The contradictions are necessary part of sailing experiences. They are here only briefly explained as the chapter 4.3 will explain the meanings of the contradictions more in-depth.

#### 4.2.7 Contradiction of nature relation to man

The Romantic and Survival ideologies are contradictory in their view of nature relation to man. Romantic ideology follows the ideal where nature is always pristine and purifying. Often when the interviewed sailors go for sailing when the weather is sunny, the Romantic ideology is easy to follow. However, when the weather changes to a storm or in other way unsettled, the sailors switch to Survival ideology. Moreover, Romantic ideology sees the nature as maternal and protecting – a refuge where one can enter to experience the supreme good of nature. According to Romantic ideology, nature is heavenly place far away from man. The Survival ideology instead sees nature as challenging putting man into danger and testing man's ability to survive. Following the ideology, nature is not a safe place and sailors need to understand that when entering the sea. The ideology sees nature profane, showing the hardy side of nature.

Following the Romantic ideology, sailors don't have to be afraid of anything at nature. Instead, nature is offering them possibility to purify from stress and other unwanted feelings or experiences. On the contrary, Survival ideology is challenging the trust on nature and emphasizing sailors' own talent to manage the boat. The lack of trust on the environment enhances trust on others:

*Keijo: One thing that has stayed in my mind lively is when we came back from a trip next to Katajanokka peninsula like back to shore. It was about 16 metres wind that is fairly much. I think 20 or 22 is the limit for storm figures. I remember it was so crooked the boat that you could stand on the bench at the inside and I guess you always think whether the boat is going to stand and what if it breaks and if it does what should we do then and .. I don't know.. That somehow I realized that my dad is really calm at the situation and you can't really be afraid there.*

All interviewees emphasized the importance of the skipper to stay calm. Above quote from Keijo's narrative shows how he follows the Survival ideology with having the feeling of being a small human being at the mercy of nature. However, having a sound trust and respect on his father he hasn't really been afraid of sailing. The relationships and sailing companion thus enhance the feeling of being stronger in the battle against revenging nature.

#### 4.2.8 Contradiction of nature relation to technology

As can be seen from the figure, the second diagonal is between Gnostic and Liberating ideologies. These two are contradictive. Gnostic ideology sees technology as a liberator from stress whereas Liberating ideology sees technology causing stress. The freedom in the former comes from technology liberating from the revenge of nature and in the latter from nature liberating from technology and hectic life.

*Jarmo: Well actually I have developed in that too. I was by nature earlier a person who wants results fast every time I was doing something. But it (sailing) has calmed me down that now I like doing thing myself and I have never felt it as servitude to maintain the boat. You just have to do it. Some things have to be done and that's it. And you don't have to do it every year but once every fifth year (to pain the boat hull), if you do it well once you don't have to varnish and paint it too often. The wooden boat is in a way a sort of thing as it is old and planned for those times and the technology is from those times. That.. the wooden boat is something that has a sort of soul and there is the sort of spiritual thing. You become closer to the element of water through it (the wooden boat), the sea*

Following the Liberating ideology, all the interviewees told sailing is a way to escape hectic life and everyday routines. While at sea you are not able to think about the responsibilities at the shore. Jarmo considers himself precise, in particular when it comes to sailing and grooming the boat. Jarmo told he goes sailing because it enables him to become relaxed and free. However he also emphasized following Gnostic ideology the importance of grooming his wooden boat. He was grooming and maintaining a wooden boat with his friends for three years before it was ready for launch and he said it was great time. He seems proud of the work he has done for the wooden boat. Grooming the boat brings the sea and his friends closer to him. When maintaining the boat himself he is able to get to know it better and to trust it and therefore to have the freedom while sailing. He feels strongly about the Gnostic ideology of nature, seeing technology and grooming the boat as an important part of the sailing experience. However, by grooming the boat he aims to get closer to the Liberating ideology where he can relax and enjoy the beautiful sceneries and the sea. Thus, Jarmo's narrative indicates that he has inner contradictions with the ideologies.

The next part will merge the different ideologies, their contrieteries and contradictions. It goes through the reason why these four different ideologies are coherently important to sailing.

### **4.3 Synthesizing contradictory ideologies**

All of the previously presented four ideologies are meaningful to sailors and enable to form a coherent experience of nature. Further, following the Semiotic Square idea, the relations of the paired concepts create the meaning (Floch 1988) of sailing consumption. The contradictions allow the sailors to have a full experience of nature. This section explains how the contradictory ideologies are synthesized by following the movement between different ideologies and how sailing as a loved activity allows sailors to construct a coherent sense of self by combining the contradictory aspects of sailors' identity. Thus, it answers the sub-question: 'what are the meanings of sailing consumption?'

There are as many meanings of sailing as there are sailors. A sailor can be a person living a hectic city life searching for a way to get closer to nature where he can relax. To such a person the meaning behind sailing is to relax near nature. On the other hand, another sailor could be a bored person searching for a little adventure. To such a person, instead, the meaning is more about getting some action and to feel alive while sailing. However, the current study found that the common meaning of sailing consumption is the synthesized solution it brings to sailors.

Indicated by the interview data, sailing is perceived as part of different identities for all the interviewees. A strong focus in the interviews was that sailing consumption contributes to sailing identity that changes according to different experiences. Sailing helps to maintain and develop a coherent sense of self that often causes difficulties to consumers (Schouten 1991). It is a way of expressing oneself to be perceived by others. The interviewees make sense of who they are through sailing identity. The self changes over time and synchronises the different stages of sailing consumption.

The boat synthesizes the self and not-self. Sailors use consumption to extend, strengthen and maintain their sense of identity:



*Kaisa: And then there was no motors in use after the war but there was a rowing boat in our rented cottage and with that I got carried away to row. I rowed at the age of five according to my estimation as long as round the Pirttisaari island that lasts for half a day. Alone. At those times parents gave freedom and believed and I got to know the sea through that and it became part of my nature. That is the starting point. There is primarily sea in my life.*

*Interviewer: What does it mean that sea is part of your nature?*

*Kaisa: I wouldn't know how to be without. Well nowadays I have of course the summer place, or well of course and of course, but it is near the sea and so it directs towards the sea. I couldn't even think of spending my time anywhere else. Not in a forest not even in Lapland. So I'm a sailor. That is the landscape, it is part of my nature and everything that relates to it so landscape, nature, the way of living, people's lives, the archipelago, the whole milieu how people live in the archipelago*

Kaisa describes how sea is “part of her nature” and how she is a sailor. Sailing is part of her nature loving identity. That is how she views herself and wants to present herself. It makes her life meaningful and stable. She has spent her entire life at the sea but started sailing only after she was around 50-years-old. The sea represents the freedom and a way to express who she is. She feels good when she is around the sea and honours people living in harmony with it. Sailing enables her to be closer to the loved element of sea and leads her to become the person she wants to be. She was able to get closer to the nature loving self than what she previously was when she was motor boating. She is thus filling the gap of the lacking personal quality with a symbolic resource (her boat).

Ahuvia (2005) presents how a synthesizing solution for two opposing ideas is resolved within a synthesis. The current study follows Ahuvia's (2005) description of a synthesizing solution and extends it to the dynamic ideological model. The Semiotic Square of nature ideologies (Figure 1) accordingly presents how opposing ideologies of nature form a coherent synthesis for sailors. In sailing consumption the synthesizing solution occurs when two opposing ideologies (Romantic vs Gnostic or Liberating vs Survival) successfully combine the previously conflicting aspects of consumer's identity creating a full experience of nature. The conflicting aspects were presented in the previous chapter explaining the

contradictive ideologies. Moreover, the study found that not only does the combination of the two extreme ideologies fulfil the experience. Instead, the idealized solutions are needed to give a more thorough description of how sailors experience nature through sailing consumption. The four different ideologies together create the synthesis between the experiences of nature. There exists no single pure nature but instead the different ideologies of nature are brought to a synthesis through how sailors experience their surrounding nature.

Ideologies tend to overrule each other. For example in Holt's (2012) example of bottled water markets the ideology of safety of bottled water was so strong that consumers could not change to drinking tap water. That made consuming tap water unattractive choice. In the context of experiencing nature, previous research suggest that consumers need to think whether they follow the Romantic ideology of nature that is environmental friendly and sees man out of pure nature and between the Gnostic ideology of nature where man is in the centre and nature revenging. However, sailing allows bringing synthesis to the contradictive ideologies. With sailing, the sailors are able to experience the nature that reminds sailors how small they are in comparison to nature (Survival ideology) but also to get free of the everyday routines when going to experience nature (Liberating ideology). That is what makes sailing so meaningful and loved to the sailors.

Sailing becomes intensely powerful through the simultaneous fulfilment of Survival and Liberating ideologies. The sailors told they were looking for romantic experiences of nature when they went sailing. However, the most extensive stories the informants told were about the Gnostic conquering of nature – how they were able to conquer dangerous unforeseen situations with the help of technology. Therefore, even though conflicting, the four ideologies live in harmony making the experience stronger enabling the “purity of pleasure” (Ahuvia 2005) – a full feeling of nature. Thus, instead of what Canniford and Shankar (2013) found in surfing context, the extraordinary experience of sailing comes from the feeling of conquering nature with Gnostic technology and then transitioning back to a romantic experience. Extending Ahuvia (2005), the narratives highlighted sailing as a loved activity helping sailors symbolically support an identity combining the conflicting ideologies.

Moreover, the Romantic and Gnostic ideologies are not the only ideologies existing in sailing experiences. Actually the Survival and Liberating ideologies are more concrete and

reachable and thus most of the sailing consumption follows the idealized solutions. Therefore, the sailor's synthesizing solution needs all four dynamics to create a meaningful experience.

A good example of the synthesizing of Romantic and Survival ideologies is Mikko describing his experience of crossing the Atlantic Ocean:

*Mikko: And of course it brought an extra that it was really warm there and the sun and the clear waters and you could just enjoy at the deck with just your shorts on and to sail..*

(..)

*I went later to keep a watch but then it was already ridiculously dark and the whole sky was just one big dark cloud and it was raining hard and the winds was blowing harsh and we were like on a roller coaster that it was something like 15 metres between the trough of the wave and the crest of the wave . It was such a roller coaster.. And the only things I could see were our own lights from five metres from the side of the boat. You couldn't see a thing. It was all black, no light anywhere. There I thought the first time what would happen if I fell off the boat. what it would mean. There I also realized how far we actually were from any sanctuary. That there is like many thousand miles to any close island and then there is the change that what if another ship comes to a collision course. Then what you should do there. That there were a lot of risk factors that were concretised when crossing the Atlantic*

Following the idea of synthesizing solution that is seen in the above quote, Mikko is able to get the advantages of both Romantic and Gnostic ideologies through sailing. When Mikko and others first left crossing the Atlantic they had a great weather and they were enjoying it. It allowed them to follow the Romantic ideology where nature was a refuge where they could enjoy the supreme goodness of nature. However, when the storm hit them, Mikko switched to Survival ideology and started thinking of himself as a small person at the mercy of nature. Nature showed as a powerful force testing man. The experience of crossing the Atlantic concretized the Survival ideology to Mikko. There he had to face the hardy nature and have a feeling of being a small human being without the power to manage the

surrounding nature. However, even when facing the unwanted side of nature, he still told this was the most memorable sailing experience he has ever had.

Mikko's story of crossing the Atlantic shows how the contrietary of nature relation to man can create a full experience of nature. By being driven by both of the ideologies (Romantic and Survival), he is able to harmonise the experience of nature. Also, by following the Romantic ideology, Mikko considers the nature as a sacred and pure place where Mother Nature is protecting him. When thrown in the middle of a storm he is able to experience both of the contradictive ideologies as he gets the adrenaline rush but does not have to be frightened, as he trusts on nature.

The story follows the previous examples of Mikko's narrative showing how he is driven by the excitement he gets from the ocean knowing that it is challenging and sometimes dangerous. Mikko describes the ocean as a "mystic place" "where no one has ever been to". He feels strongly about the Romantic ideology of nature with space and primitive nature where he can relax and be at the mercy of nature. However sailing has become an extreme sport for him. The search for anxiety through danger and challenging himself are pointing to Survival ideology. Thus, even though Mikko honours nature because it is a mystic paradise the sailing experience need to offer him excitement as he enjoys the adrenaline rush of extreme sports.

Moreover, an example of synthesizing of Gnostic and Liberating ideologies is Keijo's narrative where he talks about cruising versus racing. He is an active race sailor and goes seldom cruising.

*Keijo: In general I have become fond of race sailing and when you think of cruising the travelling is as much as half of the trip and maybe you end up in a shore.. and me and Juuso and my parents have always had the tradition when we go to shore that it is very important to consider what we eat. That we don't eat any pasta but we have fine equipment at the boat and at the shore we prepare great real food and have good wine and put great food to the afterdeck and eat outside and enjoy it. And somehow it is like you are there at the nature like safely*

(..)

*Well, we have though of what is our relationship to cruising. That somehow it has felt that I have never been so excited about it before. But now I would like to try it again. To go to a cruising trip to think what kind of way to take. That somehow it lacks of something that I think it is boring compared to race sailing that it is something you go for a day or night. Race sailing is so intensive.*

Experiencing both cruising and sailing Keijo is able to move between the contradictive ideologies of Gnostic and Liberating. Cruising represents the Liberating ideology for Keijo. He admires nature and has started to appreciate it more and to be concerned of it. He goes cruising if he wants to be more connected to the nature and experience the liberating technology of sailing. To be cruising does not need much according to him and can be even a bit boring. Therefore following the Gnostic ideology Keijo goes race sailing to get more excitement and to show what he is capable of when conquering the nature. Thus the freedom in cruising comes from being able to be closer to the nature and not being able to do much. In contradiction, the freedom of racing shows in being able to conquer the nature with technology and being able to have the control over the environment by moving fast by optimizing the robs and sails. She is able to experience both while sailing.

Sailing as a loved activity to which sailors spend extensive amount of time and other resources allows the consumers to have a synthesis between the conflicting ideologies. Similar to Ahuvia's (2005) findings, loved activities provide synthetizing solution also in the sailing context by synthetizing sailors' identity conflicts. Love is a common feeling within consumption. Loved items, activities and people have a strong influence of who we are. (Ahuvia 2005). We can say that sailing is a loved activity: Sailors spend numerous hours in the search of the right kind of sailing boat as well as maintaining the boat year after year. Every sailing experience is unique and meaningful as sailors are able to follow the different ideologies having different meanings in sailors' life. Thus, according to the narratives sailors fulfil their experiences of sailing by synthesizing the four dynamics.

Sailing consumption changes over time that makes a strong bond to it and makes it meaningful – even loved. Thus a common reason to go out to sea sailing is the ability to develop oneself. Most of the interviewees told they were first a little unsure of the sea and uncertain of their skills but once they had spent more time on the boat and got the feeling

that they handle the boat they were able to trust themselves. Especially the harsh weather conditions had challenged the interviewees allowing them to feel of having handle of the boat. Sailors go through a development process. There are courses that they attend to but the key is to get comfortable with the boat:

*Tiitta: So I like to look at this and try different types of weather conditions and everything. I'm not any teacher and I can't stand.. I like that sailing is being taught but I don't like that the sports have changed into this sort of that there are those all kinds of papers that you get to yourself with going to all of these different sailing schools. I mean okay I understand the necessity of sailing schools but that you go there that hey I got the helmsman papers or the skipper papers and so you are somehow better and then if you can't perform but you think that you can only on paper deal things. You can't handle everything at the sea only on a paper but you need to truly understand the sea and sailing and what it means when the wind and sea come together. And what the shape of the boat does for the waves and for the wind*

While Tiitta appreciates sailing courses, she emphasizes how sailing is only learned by doing. Shown by her mildly displeased tone, what makes sailing so unique to her is that it is something you have to experience yourself in order to learn. She is fascinated by how the wind and sea work together, and she is proud of her skills to understand the nature. It is strongly driven by learning by doing. However, even though you can develop yourself while going into sailing, you still can face problems and every sailing experience is unique. Thus sailing is rarely boring but creates new excitement every time.

The movement between the ideologies enable a sailor to have the synthesizing solution. As became clear from the explanations of contradictions and contrivances between the ideologies, sailors move between the different ideologies. During one sailing experience they can follow multiple ideologies, for example to have a sense of Liberating ideology when leaving the shore, then following the Survival ideology and finally going back to Liberating. The movement between the ideologies is what makes sailing extraordinary and allows sailors to have a unique and meaningful experience every time. The movement is embedded in sailors' differing ideologies.

## 4.4 Summary

Sailing consumption and experiences are never disconnected from nature. Nature gives basis to sailing and makes every sailing experience meaningful. Multiple nature ideologies influence sailors' experiences that form an interrelated synthesis within one consumption context. The findings were formed into a Semiotic Square of nature ideologies of sailing consumption (Figure 1) that identifies four different nature ideologies all influencing sailing experiences. Sailors move between the different ideologies even during a single sailing experience. The findings illustrate how the extreme ideologies of Romantic and Gnostic create a need for the idealized solutions of Liberating and Survival. It even presents how most of the consumption happens in the idealized solutions when the two extreme ideologies are hard to fully reach. Moreover, the framework illustrates how contradictions between the ideologies bring synthesis to the experiences regardless of the contending ideologies. Thus, the founded four ideologies are but in some part contradictive, also forming a coherent sense of self to sailors. Sailing as a loved activity then brings the contradictive identities together and helps the sailors to form a coherent sense of self.

The meaning behind sailing consumption for the interviewed sailors was showed through the symbolic meanings. The meaning is created through the contradictive nature of sailing. Especially, sailing brings a synthesizing solution between the contradictions. The sailing boat as a possession object is maintained to become part of sailors' identity. Through the sailing activity and possession objects the sailors construct who they are and express to others how they would like to be perceived. The synthesizing solution allows bringing the contradictive identities of self into a coherent sense of self.

## 5 Discussion

This section further discusses the key findings of the study. It will present how the findings change the previous view of experiencing nature through consumption. The main research question addressed how consumers experience nature through sailing. The first sub-question asked about the ideologies that influence sailors' thought, speech and action and the second about meanings behind sailing consumption. This research finds that meanings behind sailing consumption stem from sailors' identity work and is driven by nature. The study also found multiple nature ideologies affecting sailing consumption and framed these to a Semiotic Square framework illustrating the interrelated synthesis between the ideologies. The third question focused on the study background in sustainable consumption and asked what kinds of opportunities for sustainable consumption do the findings from sailors' nature experiences offer. This section will further elaborate on these themes, explain how the study contributes to academic research and give suggestions for future research.

Consumers experience nature through a variety of consumption objects, acts and technologies (Belk and Costa 1998; Ahuvia 2005; Canniford and Shankar 2013). Experiencing nature is a complex affair influenced by others and self, formed through different ideologies and harmonized by loved activities and objects. The current study aimed to explore and extend previous research on how ideologies of nature influence consumption. It contributes to the important discussion of nature ideologies especially by introducing a dynamic model of nature ideologies. Marketplace ideologies are powerful in influencing consumption and giving consumers strong sense of personal and social identity (Crockett and Wallendorf 2004). Previous research also shows, there is a constant interplay and movement between different ideologies and one consumption experience can be influenced by multiple ideologies (Thompson 2004, Kozinets 2008). The study explored sailing experiences in order to specify Romantic, Gnostic, Survival and Liberating ideologies and the synthesizing collective representation of them.

The background of the current study is in unsustainable consumption of antifouling paints in leisure time boats, sailing boats in this context to be precise. Multiple previous researches have focused on studying sustainable consumption, but the reasons for unsustainable consumption remain unclear (Heiskanen and Pantzar 1997; Shove 2010). Extensive amount of studies have focused on exploring the attitude-behaviour gap of why consumers have an



environmental friendly attitude but they still keep on causing harm to the environment – consumers tend not to “walk the talk” (e.g. Vermeir and Verbeke 2006; Gupta and Ogden 2009). The study at hand attests the argument. The interviewed sailors told they honour nature and want to protect it. Some of them even see themselves as stewards of the ocean protecting the sea and setting an example to others. They are highly driven by nature and environment. All of the interviewees also told they had realized the changes in the Baltic Sea and were worried about the condition of the sea. Thus we can say that sailors have sustainable values and that they understand the current alarming situation at the Baltic Sea. However, when describing their maintenance habits they told how they use unsustainable paints and talked about it as the “poisonous paint”. Only few of them mentioned they try to use the paint in a sustainable way. Grooming the boat is an important part of developing trust to the boat and to oneself. Thus, a clear gap between sailors’ attitude and behaviour can be identified. These findings show that unsustainable consumption practices can emerge even in social settings where consumers have the value-orientation to be sustainable.

More culturally focused studies have argued that the reason for not being able to find the underlying reasons for the gap is that behaviour is treated in the studies as a separated practice from consumers’ social and cultural background (Dolan 2002; Spaargaren 2002; Holt 2012). The current study took the social focus in sustainable consumption research. It gave a deeper understanding of how sailors experience nature by gaining understanding of the cultural history of the sailing consumption. The focus follows the idea that one needs to understand the ideologies in order to understand unsustainable consumption. Thus, we need to first understand the meanings and ideologies behind sailing consumption in order to understand their unsustainable behaviour. The ideologies influence consumption and are powerful in giving sense to consumers of their personal and social identity (Tumbat and Belk 2011). The current study found that there exist different nature ideologies that influence sailors’ experiences and thus their sustainable and unsustainable consumption.

Sailing consumption is a complex issue affected by history and social structures. The strongest single thing behind the meanings of sailing consumption is the ever-changing environment of nature surrounding them and creating meaning in every sailing experience. The meanings behind sailing consumption are numerous and each sailor has an own meaning for sailing. Following the symbolic meanings of sailing consumption, the study found that sailing is perceived as part of identity for all the interviewees. Sailing

consumption helps the interviewees to define themselves and get closer to who they want to be. It allows developing oneself, getting a feeling of control, improving self-esteem and self-confidence that is (re-)formed or adjusted according to sailing experiences. The sailing boat has a strong role in the sailing identity work. The boat is a possession that the sailor maintains so as to become part of the self. Sailing contributes also to constructing the outward social self by getting closer to loved ones, creating and maintaining friendships and gaining social status. Sailing brings the possible conflicting identities together. Especially, experiencing nature is tied into constructing identity both inward and outward. Sailors can't dissociate the meanings of sailing from experiencing nature.

Following the foundation of existential-phenomenology (Pollio et. al. 1997), sailors experience nature through various nature ideologies through which they synthesize their inner contradictions. Previous studies discussing ideologies of nature have focused on one or two ideologies of nature and have lacked the analysis of the relationships between different ideologies. Especially, the previous research has focused on the romantic consumption of nature where nature is seen as the "divine Mother Earth" (e.g. Arnould and Price 1993; Belk and Costa 1998; Canniford and Shankar 2013). These studies often forget the dangerous side of nature as revengful (Scholtz 2012). Moreover, they seem to stick to the opposing ideologies of Romantic and Gnostic (Thompson 2004) but leave out the discussion of how these two ideologies are extreme and even surreal. Therefore, the current study contributes to existing studies of nature ideologies by bringing the dynamic ideological model into discussion. The four contradictive ideologies of nature show the dynamic and multisided ideologies of nature through which sailing is experienced and frames it into a Semiotic Square.

The Semiotic Square of nature ideologies is a complex model as each ideology is linked to every other one. Thus it is a good way of representing the complexity of experiencing nature. The study made the dynamic between Gnostic and Romantic Ideology a central inquiry, a point also briefly discussed by Canniford and Shankar (2013), in understanding experiences of nature. These two ideologies in the research context were similar to previous studies and were found from the current study context. However, the current study extends the previous research and emphasizes how most of sailing consumption follows the idealized solutions of Survival and Liberating ideologies whereas Romantic and Gnostic are seen as extreme ideologies that create a need for the idealized solutions. Survival ideology

emphasizes how storms enable a full experience of nature and requires trust on others and the boat and enables developing identity. Liberating ideology instead brings the sailor closer to nature, allows him to let go and drives ecological behaviour by the maintenance of the boat before leaving the shore. Following the idea on Semiotic Square (Floch 1988), the differences and contradictions create the meaning to sailors.

The four different ideologies are contradictive by nature and the Semiotic Square model represents how the different ideologies form a coherent harmony of experiencing nature. Sailing never offers a simple pleasure but rather an existentially meaningful pleasure. Sailors fulfill their experiences of nature by synthesizing the four dynamics of nature. Sailing becomes intensely powerful through the movement between the different ideologies of nature. Thus, instead of what Canniford and Shankar (2013) found in their surfing context, the extraordinary experience of sailing comes from the following of the different ideologies. Sailors were found to follow multiple ideologies within a single sailing experience. For example, the sailors told that on a beautiful day they were searching for romantic experiences but the Gnostic experiences and the feeling of conquering the nature were fulfilling the experience. Therefore, even though conflicting, the four ideologies live in harmony making the experience stronger enabling the “purity of pleasure” (Ahuvia 2005) – a full feeling of nature. Moreover, the study extends previous research by exploring how loved activities bring synthesizing solution between the four ideologies of nature. The synthesizing solution to sailors was created through the simultaneous movement between the ideologies. It allows sailors to get advantages of both Liberating and Survival ideology that was well indicated by Mikko’s story of crossing the Atlantic. Sailing as a loved activity helps the sailors to combine the contending identities into a harmonious self.

Coming back to the current study’s background in sustainable consumption discussion, if we wanted to promote more sustainable paints to sailors, we should bare in mind the complex dynamic of nature ideologies that underlie sailing consumption. Media and green advertising often pictures the nature as a green and harmonic place by posting pictures of green fields and never ending picturesque forests - a getaway from the modern society and an entrance to a new peaceful place. They seldom show the dangerous and revenging sides of nature leaving consumer passive (Scholz 2012). Thus, following Scholz (2012) the current study suggests that to influence in sailors’ unsustainable behaviour, we need to understand and treat consumers as active creators of the harmony with nature. Sailors are driven by not only

the Romantic ideology of nature but also their human capabilities to conquer nature. Consumers' actions are engaged with nature and marketing should draw on this more realistic view of nature.

Following the current research, marketing communication should build on the different nature ideologies. Instead of asking consumers to reject the market ideologies they embrace, sustainable communication needs to acknowledge and overcome the ideologies holding the unsustainable consumption in place (Holt 2012). For example in the context of sailing and the unsustainable use of antifouling paints, the need for safety in Survival ideology is one thing to hold the consumption in place. When the sailors have been taught to use the antifouling paints in order to be safe while sailing, the Romantic ideology of nature that encourages the sailors to protect the environment is not strong enough. That is where the different ideologies take place in sailing. Not only does the Romantic ideology drive the sailors. Therefore when trying to influence their unsustainable consumption, also the Gnostic side should be taken into consideration. For example the more environmental paint could be brought to the market by not solely focusing on its environmental friendliness but emphasizing the safety of it to the sailors. This alternative sustainable communication strategy could then have more effective market-facing social movement (Holt 2012) than when concentrating in only changing the attitudes of sailors that actually are environmental already.

## **5.1 Theoretical implications**

The current study brings interesting new insight to the study of nature ideologies and provides new context to consumer culture and existential-phenomenology studies. The study follows the existing socially focused research of sustainable consumption focusing on marketplace ideologies. It contributes to the existing research by bringing a novel idea of nature ideologies by introducing the dynamic ideological model to experiencing nature.

The study extends previous research by claiming that there exists no pure single nature to which all the sailors can relate to and what drives them while sailing. Instead, the study found four differing, even contradictive ideologies of Romantic, Gnostic, Survival and Liberating. An, especially interesting new insight are the two idealized solutions - Survival and Liberating ideologies - that are created when Romantic and Gnostic are too extreme. Moreover, the study found that sailors move between the ideologies even during a single

sailing experience. Thus, each experience of nature is driven by multiple nature ideologies that should be taken into consideration by marketers considering sustainable marketing strategies.

The study also emphasizes and extends our view of a synthesizing solution. The four opposing ideologies are synthesized within a harmonic solution that allows sailors to have a full experience of nature. The movement between the ideologies as well as sailing as a loved activity provide the synthesizing solution. Thus experiencing nature is not a static feeling but rather an on-going process of developing self and searching for existentially meaningful experiences.

## **5.2 Limitations and further research**

The study was made following the existential-phenomenological methodology. Thus, the sailors' lived experiences were described as they emerged from the context (Thompson et al. 1989). Therefore, the aim of the study is not to generalize the findings but to understand the human phenomena of few individual's experiences (Hycner 1989). The study is time bound, idiographic and context dependent. In addition, the study takes interpretive approach where it is based on the researchers' own pre-understanding and interpretation (Moisander and Valtonen 2006). Therefore the results of the study are reflections of the researcher's own view of the world and hence other researchers might have made other conclusions and different interpretations. That is not making the results any more or less interesting or accurate but gives interesting possibilities for future studies at the same time giving a unique value to the current study.

The study at hand focused on understanding sailors' unsustainable consumption by studying how consumers experience nature through sailing consumption. Even though it gave insight to the meanings and ideologies underlying sailing consumption, more is needed to study why sailors use toxic antifouling paints. The challenge of sustainable consumption is how to translate the sustainable aims into policy approaches that positively affect the actions of citizens (Hobson 2003). Future study could focus on the practices behind sailing consumption and what the different practices are in sailing illustrating how painting the boat is embedded in the consumption. Moreover, an interesting research for future studies would be exploring the ideological lock-in behind painting practices. In order to change the lock-in, marketers need to understand the structures holding the unsustainable consumption in place

(Holt 2002). For example the toxic paints have played an important role in fulfilling the experience of nature for sailors. Thus the research of ideological lock-in should focus on exploring what is behind consuming toxic paints that holds the consumption in place.

The study also provided new insight to the research of nature ideologies. Sailing consumption is only one context and another context studying nature ideologies would bring interesting insights of whether the different nature ideologies are similar in different contexts. Especially interesting would be to study the ideologies relating to some other nature element than the sea. The current study context focused on six well-experienced Finnish sailors. The six interviews were highly in-depth and therefore more than enough for the current study to understand the underlying ideologies behind sailing consumption. An interesting insight to the discussion could be studying what kind of ideologies come up when interviewing respondents with different background.

## 6 Conclusion

The empirical part of the study revealed a gap in the previous literature studying experiencing nature when studying sustainable consumption research. Previous research has not studied how different ideologies of nature exist in experiencing nature. In previous research, only two nature ideologies Gnostic and Romantic have been discussed. These ideologies however were found to be too extreme to reach and thus idealized solutions are needed to enrich the discussion of experiencing nature. The study found two idealized solutions from the sailing context –Survival and Liberating – that are contradictive with the extreme ideologies but at the same time fulfilling the experience of nature.

Following the findings of the study, nature is the highest meaning of sailing consumption. The current study illustrated that sailors experience nature through multiple ideologies influencing the experiences simultaneously. The ideologies are full of contrieteries, contradictions and complimentaries making experiencing nature a complex issue. However, the simultaneous fulfilment of the different ideologies for one allows having a full experience of nature. Sailors are able to construct a coherent sense of self through the simultaneous fulfilment of the different ideologies.

The study also brought interesting insight to previous research by showing how the different ideologies bring synthesizing solution and enable to have a full experience of nature. It found that a synthesized solution is created in sailing through the movement between the ideologies and sailing as a loved activity. There exists no single pure nature but instead consumers move between different ideologies even during a single consumption experience. Thus the study proposes that marketers should not stick to only Romantic ideology of nature when making decisions of sustainable marketing.

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