1.1 Background of the Study

In today’s era of globalization which characterized by the increasing of the advancement in all fields, become one of the reality that can’t be shunned by every person that live in this era. As the result, this social development offered pleasure of life with modern style called hedonism and materialism phenomena. Generally, someone preoccupation with wealth can be described as the represented of materialism fulfillment in ‘things’, while hedonism regarded as preoccupation that viewed the fulfillment of someone life deals with ‘pleasure’. In fact, this social development changes also bring some negative effects to the society, such as the problems that contain materialistic and hedonistic behaviors.

Nowadays, these behaviors can be seen from some few examples of pleasure consumption that already spread wildly, such as alcoholics, smoking, drugs, leisure sex and also money as the social necessities symbol. In the recent study, these phenomena not only appear in reality life, but also become one of the object analyses that connected and inspired some writers in writing literary works.

“Hedonism is the name applied to any system of ethics which regards pleasure or happiness as the chief good: as the good, that is, which makes all other goods desirable and to which they are all means. In fact, the most hedonists, virtue is the name given to that kind of action which long experience has shown to conduce to happiness, while materialism in theory of philosophy refer to everything that is material or results from matter.” (Encyclopedia Americana, 1970)
Generally, literary works are the creative imagination based on the writer experiences, feeling and idea that expressed beautifully through their works. One work can be called as a good literary work if it consists of some functions that will become valuable when people read it.

Talking about society and social imitation through literary works, it can be interpreted that the writer in their works tries to ‘imitate’ the terms dealing with human conditions in real life. This term is well known as the sociology of literature approach, which also emphasizes by Eagleton (1996:103) that said, “The relevance of all this to literature becomes clear when we realize that the literary works themselves can be seen as speech acts, or as an imitation of them. Literature may appear to be describing the world.” One of the relation example between literary works and social imitation is in ‘This Side of Paradise’ novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald that deals with the negative effects of social changes, such as hedonism and materialism of American society especially the young generation in early of 1920’s or it is also known as Jazz Age.

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald the American author, was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1896. He was educated at St. Paul Academy, the Newman School and Princeton University, he joined the army and went to France to join the World War I in 1917. On his return from France, then he decided to complete and published his first novel, This Side of Paradise (1920) which achieved immediate financial and critical success. This novel indeed seemed to galvanize the youth of the era, which became known as the “Jazz Age”. Whereas also seemed to decide the literary preoccupation of Fitzgerald, to the hedonism and materialism concept
as the portrayal of American society at that time. He continued to record and focuses these ideas which can be found in his other novels and story collection such as *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920), *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), *The Beautiful and the Damned* (1922) and two novels consider his best works, *The Great Gatsby* (1925) and *The Last Tycoon* (incomplete because Fitzgerald’s death in 1940, but then publish to acclaim in 1941).

*This Side of Paradise* is a story about the way of American people life in early 1920’s that represented by the major character of the novel, Amory Blaine. Amory is the son of a wealthy industrialist and a traditional socialite mother, who is searching for his identity as a new generation. The era when the term of new social style change the way of American new generation behaves, which reflected between Amory and other characters in the novel. Moreover, it can also be seen in this novel about the social changes in American society especially for the young generations in their modern era after World War I which is well known as the jazz age. The era that portrait hedonism and materialism phenomena as the negative effects of social changes which regarded from the war impact.

In doing this thesis, I consult and use some thesis that refer to the social condition of America in 1920’s and before the era. First, the thesis entitled ‘An Analysis of Social Reflection in America Based on F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby’, Sa’idah (2008). This thesis explains about the social condition of American society in ‘Roaring Twenties’ that reflected through the characters in *The Great Gatsby* novel. The second reference that I use deals with ‘Materialism in novel The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald’, which had been research by
Nurul Nayla Azmi (2009). The main object of this thesis is to portray the impact of money that can control human life, because people never feel satisfied of what they have. While the other source which focuses on American social condition in 19th century can be seen from Anggaraini (2007) thesis entitled ‘American Social Condition in the late of 19th Century found in Stephen Crane’s Maggie: A Girl of the Street’. The writer in this thesis analyze about the immigrants and poverty problems in America caused by the Civil War.

The explanations above become the reason why I choose the topic ‘Hedonism and Materialism as negative effects of Social Changes in American Society portrayed in This Side of Paradise by F. Scott Fitzgerald’ in doing this thesis. Thus, I decided to focus the object of the analysis in the first beginning of ‘Jazz Age’ era from 1918-1920, that represents the characteristic of social changes in that period in this novel. The era that portrays the life of American social condition in early 1920’s that become the age of American triumph and modernism. Furthermore, this novel focuses about the hedonism and materialism in American society as the impact of the economic and social rapid change in early 1920’s, which represented by the characters from this novel. Thus, from Fitzgerald point of view in this novel, it can be seen how history can also change the perspectives of an individual or societies lives which pictured from This Side of Paradise.

As hedonism and materialism phenomena are still exist and can be found in our daily life, the needs of local wisdom as the rejection key become an important thing to have for the society nowadays. Thus, the starting point should
be started from the individual of the society itself, such as by having deep understanding of local culture and traditions, having strong faith (religion), and also good manners in order avoid and reject these phenomena.

1.2 Problems of the Study

In analyzing this thesis, I focus the object of analysis to some social problems that appeared in *This Side of Paradise* novel. They are

1. What are the negative effects of social changes in American society portrayed in *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald?

2. How are the negative effects of social changes in American society portrayed in *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Concerning to the problem above, this thesis tries to find out the answers of those questions, they are:

1. To describe the negative effects of social changes in American society portrayed in *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

2. To describe the impact of negative effects of social changes in American society portrayed in *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.
1.4 Scope of the Study

To limit the analysis, I focus my research only on the negative effects of social changes in America, including the hedonistic and materialistic behaviors in early 1920’s as reflected in This Side of Paradise by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

1.5 Significance of the Study

By doing this thesis, I hope it can give benefit for both theoretical and practical aspects. Theoretically, the study of this thesis will be able to give information to the readers about hedonism and materialism phenomena of American society in early 1920’s based on This Side of Paradise by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Beside that, I also hope that this thesis will enrich the knowledge of English Department students in studying about hedonism and materialism as a part of sociology of literature context. While practically, this research shows that human should be aware of the effects that are caused by negative luxurious in real life which still happens nowadays. The example can be seen by hedonistic behavior like alcoholics, smoking, drugs consumption, free sex and also materialistic behavior that consider money as the social necessities symbol. So, to reject and avoid these problems in daily life, it is better if the society especially for the young generation to have strong faith, traditions and also local wisdom as their role key. The last but not least, I do hope that this research will be useful to the readers and will lead another researcher that interested in this kind of analysis.