Irony is one of the most powerful elements in *The Known World*, a novel written by Edward P. Jones. It is present in almost all parts of the novel, that analyzing it is paramount in understanding what the author tries to convey.

The problems analyzed in this thesis are how the characters who depict the irony illustrate the irony itself and what the function of the irony is. The goals are to identify the characters that illustrate the ironies in the novel, to examine the illustrated ironies, and to reveal the significant function of the ironies.

To analyze the irony, an understanding of characters involved is necessary. The characters are then divided into flat and round characters to give in-depth explanation. By analyzing the characters, three kinds of irony are found; dramatic irony, irony of situation, and irony of fate.

Henry Townsend, William Robbins, Fern Elston are some of the characters who portray the irony through their actions, utterances, and author’s description. Edward P. Jones uses irony to criticize the slavery conducted by African American. They enslaved their own people. He also reveals the flaws of law and the wrong function of religion back then.

In conclusion, after analyzing and elaborating the characters and ironies used, the law and social condition in Manchester County, Virginia during eighteenth to nineteenth century can be visibly perceived. Moreover, it gives additional understanding on the complexity of slavery.

Keywords: flat character, round character, irony, critique