HISTORICAL RESUME

The occurrence of "amoebic dysentery" and its occasional association with "hepatic flux" have been recognized for a long time although, the proper identification of the disease was not well delineated due to the ignorance about the essential etiological agent. Concerning our knowledge of amoebae they were seen for the first time in 1775 by Rosenhof as a microscopic being that was constantly changing its shape and was called as the "little proteus".

Lewis (1870) described the parasite in faecal specimens. Losch (1875) first described amoebic dysentery in a patient in Russia and further reproduced colitis in dogs by either oral or rectal administration of patient's stool. Koch (1887) described tissue invasion by amoebae. Kartulis (1889) reported the amoebic involvement of extra intestinal tissues. Councilman and Lafleur (1891) reported the pathologic description of amoebic infection of bowel and liver. Quincke and Roos (1893) first recognised the cysts of the amoebic parasite. Schaudinn (1903) named the organism as *Entamoeba histolytica* because of its apparent ability to lyse tissue. Rogers (1912) defined the efficacy of emetine for the treatment of amoebiasis in India. Walker and Sellards (1913) demonstrated that *E. histolytica* was the causative agent for dysentery whereas *Entamoeba coli* was nonpathogenic. Boeck and Drbohlov (1925) were the first to successfully culture *E. histolytica* in a biphasic medium. Recent major advances include the development of culture media for the growth of axenic *E. histolytica* by Diamond (1961, 1968).

Rapid advances in various aspects of amoebic disease are being explored from different corners of the globe. Since it is quite impossible to discuss all the studies within this brief preview of the present dissertation, some of the salient and
relevant contributions pertaining to the present investigation have been reviewed in the following sections.

Bos (1973) confirmed the pathogenic potential of carrier strains of *E. histolytica* in hamster liver. Phillips (1973) reported the role of culture conditions in the variability of virulence. Diamond et al (1974) observed the virulence attenuation after prolonged axenic cultivation. Bos and Hage (1975) showed the role of *Crithidia* sp. in maintaining amoebic virulence. Lysis of axenic amoebae by non-immune human sera was shown by Ortiz-Ortiz et al (1978).


Torian et al (1989) identified a serologically reative 96 Kilodalton antigen in *E. histolytica* and also defined an antigen test using a cloned antigen.