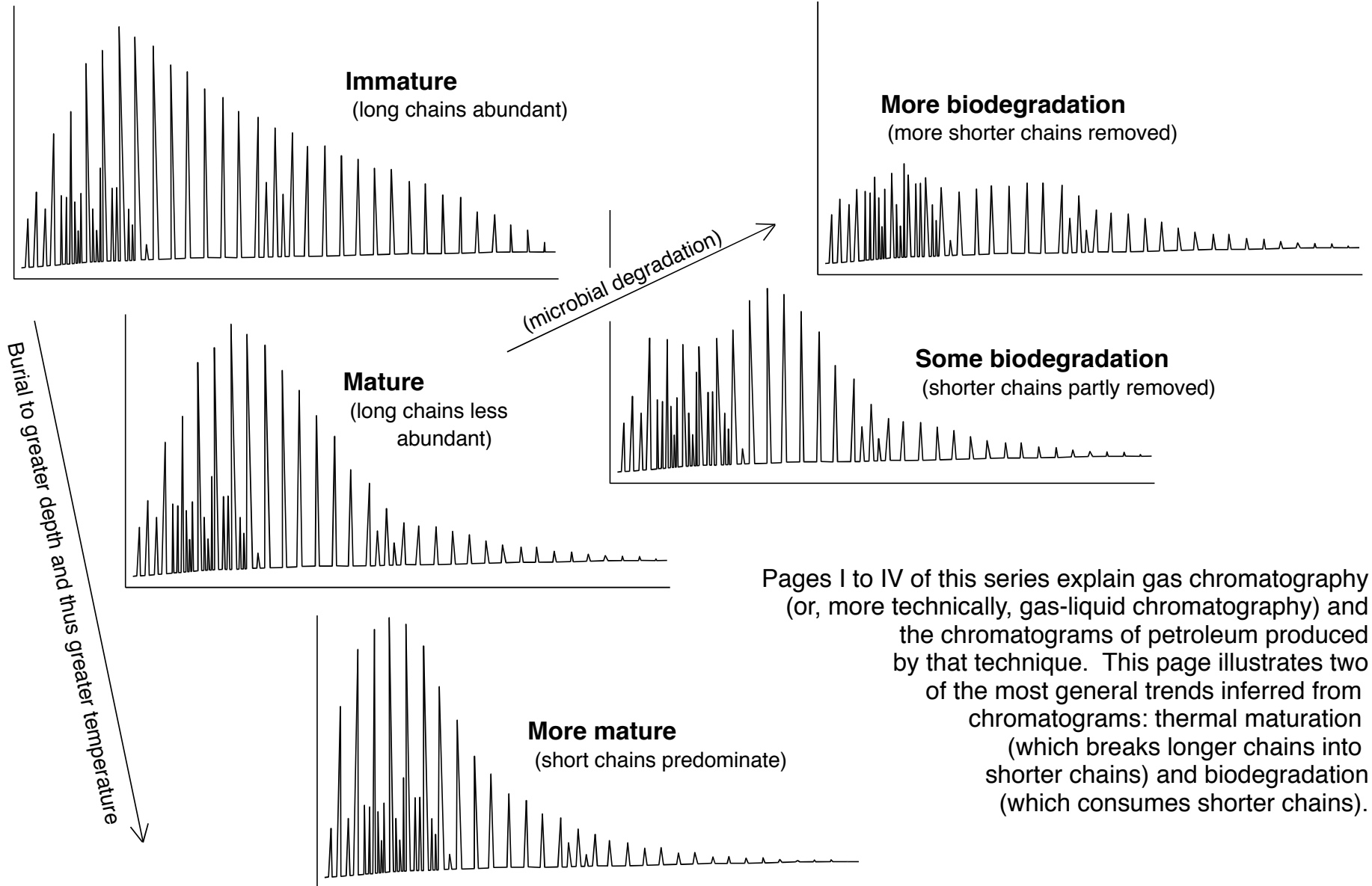


Chromatograms of petroleum V: oil through time



Pages I to IV of this series explain gas chromatography (or, more technically, gas-liquid chromatography) and the chromatograms of petroleum produced by that technique. This page illustrates two of the most general trends inferred from chromatograms: thermal maturation (which breaks longer chains into shorter chains) and biodegradation (which consumes shorter chains).