

Spinodal phase separation in nuclear collisions

Jørgen Randrup

Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, USA

Spinodal amplification provides a mechanism by which the translational symmetry of bulk matter is broken as the system spontaneously separates into its thermodynamically coexisting phases. This general phenomenon has been exploited to signal the nuclear liquid-gas phase structure in nuclear collision experiments at medium energies and it may also be used to demonstrate the expected first-order confinement transition in relativistic collisions. Current studies of this possibility are discussed.