

Millimeter-Wave Spectrum, Centrifugal Distortion Analysis, and Energy Levels of HNO_3 ¹

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One hundred and eleven new rotational transitions of HNO_3 have been measured in the millimeter-microwave region. This data set is the basis for a centrifugal distortion analysis and for the calculation of a complete set of energy levels through $J = 50$. The constants which result from this analysis are (in megahertz): $A = 13\,011.0287 \pm 0.0057$, $B = 12\,099.8611 \pm 0.0057$, $C = 6260.6391 \pm 0.0006$, $\Delta_J = (14.038 \pm 0.026) \times 10^{-3}$, $\Delta_{JK} = (-20.1780 \pm 0.0037) \times 10^{-3}$, $\Delta_K = (7.4153 \pm 0.0108) \times 10^{-3}$, $\delta_J = (1.1828 \pm 0.00039) \times 10^{-3}$, $\delta_K = (-20.5648 \pm 0.0046) \times 10^{-3}$, $H_J = (-9.84 \pm 3.82) \times 10^{-8}$, $H_{JK} = (-9.933 \pm 0.367) \times 10^{-8}$, $H_{KJ} = (1.03 \pm 0.12) \times 10^{-7}$, $h_J = (-9.241 \pm 0.127) \times 10^{-9}$, $h_{JK} = (-1.398 \pm 0.032) \times 10^{-7}$, and $h_K = (1.135 \pm 0.027) \times 10^{-6}$.

INTRODUCTION

Nitric acid is a near-oblate asymmetric rotor with rotational constants of the order of 10 GHz and moderate centrifugal distortion. The presence of this species in the atmosphere and its basic role in chemistry have stimulated numerous spectroscopic studies. The rotational spectrum of HNO_3 has been studied in the centimeter-wave region (1–3), and Kaushik and Venkateswarlu (4) have performed a centrifugal distortion analysis of these data. They noted that the relatively large standard deviations of the resulting coefficients and the indeterminacy of τ_{ccc} must be ascribed to the data set available. Conventional infrared spectroscopy reveals only broad vibrational bands because of the dense rotational fine structure of HNO_3 (5–8). Recently, however, Brockman *et al.* (9) have published an unassigned diode laser spectrum of HNO_3 in the 11- μm region that clearly resolves the rotational fine structure. Several other diode laser studies of HNO_3 are also in progress (10).

In this paper we report the measurement of 111 rotational transitions in the region between 80 and 300 GHz. This spectral coverage results in a well-conditioned data set which makes possible an accurate centrifugal distortion analysis and calculation of energy levels through $J = 50$. These ground-vibrational-state energy levels can serve as a basis for the analysis of the complex rotation–vibration spectra which are now being recorded as well as for the study of

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TABLE I
Observed Microwave Transitions of HNO_3 (MHz)

Transition	Observed frequency	Transition	Observed frequency	Transition	Observed frequency
1(0 1)-0(0 0)	18 360.530 ^a	10(4 0)-9(4 5)	181 789.200	25(22 3)-25(23 2)	-100 637.790
1(1 1)-0(0 0)	19 271.600 ^a	11(0 11)-10(1 10)	144 004.240	25(22 3)-25(23 3)	-100 842.920
2(1 0)-2(1 1)	-17 517.490 ^a	11(9 3)-11(9 2)	-12 317.450 ^a	25(17 9)-25(18 6)	-100 569.340
2(0 2)-2(1 1)	-17 616.080 ^a	11(3 8)-10(3 7)	181 678.130	25(14 12)-25(15 11)	-141 778.830
2(1 2)-1(0 1)	31 792.800 ^a	12(3 10)-11(2 9)	181 630.790	25(14 12)-25(14 11)	-141 778.310
3(1 2)-3(3 1)	-22 161.000 ^a	12(10 3)-12(10 2)	-9 245.560 ^a	26(11 15)-26(13 14)	-130 446.050
3(2 1)-3(3 0)	-9 447.970 ^a	12(1 12)-12(1 11)	-144 339.740	27(24 3)-27(25 2)	-111 014.200
3(1 2)-3(2 1)	-16 700.740 ^a	13(2 12)-12(2 11)	181 594.580	27(24 4)-27(25 3)	-111 081.200
4(3 2)-4(3 1)	-14 534.250 ^a	14(2 12)-14(3 11)	-144 198.890	28(24 4)-28(25 3)	-105 822.560
5(4 2)-5(4 1)	-12 540.980 ^a	14(0 14)-13(1 13)	181 560.280	28(24 5)-28(25 4)	-106 141.210
5(3 3)-5(3 2)	-29 175.320 ^a	14(2 12)-14(4 11)	-144 198.940	30(29 1)-30(30 0)	-143 860.370
6(5 2)-6(5 1)	-10 344.230 ^a	15(1 15)-15(2 14)	-181 995.690	30(25 5)-30(26 4)	-103 954.590
6(4 3)-6(4 2)	-27 369.670 ^a	16(8 9)-16(9 8)	-105 667.150	30(25 6)-30(26 5)	-105 807.140
6(3 4)-5(3 3)	106 481.320	16(7 9)-16(8 8)	-105 665.850	30(19 12)-30(20 11)	-138 917.330
6(2 4)-5(2 3)	106 646.550	16(2 15)-16(3 14)	-181 997.420	30(18 12)-30(19 11)	-138 890.960
7(6 2)-7(6 1)	-8 067.580 ^a	17(6 12)-17(7 11)	-143 867.520	30(23 7)-30(25 6)	-144 635.990
7(5 3)-7(5 2)	-24 993.510 ^a	17(2 15)-17(3 14)	-181 638.630	30(22 8)-30(24 7)	-103 777.550
7(1 6)-6(1 5)	106 483.440	17(3 14)-16(3 13)	256 757.160	30(21 10)-30(21 9)	-107 091.060
8(6 3)-8(6 2)	-22 147.000 ^a	18(4 15)-18(5 14)	-181 758.230	30(18 12)-30(20 11)	-138 919.210
8(7 1)-7(7 0)	174 944.800	18(6 12)-18(8 11)	-143 715.920	30(19 12)-30(19 11)	-138 888.080
8(6 2)-7(6 1)	169 702.230	18(2 16)-17(2 15)	256 723.390	30(13 13)-30(13 17)	-217 946.740
8(6 2)-7(6 1)	180 101.520	19(5 15)-19(6 14)	-181 654.810	30(13 13)-30(13 17)	-217 946.740
8(4 5)-7(4 4)	144 146.640	19(1 18)-18(1 17)	256 691.080	31(20 12)-31(21 11)	-138 125.840
8(3 5)-7(3 4)	144 201.860	20(6 15)-20(7 14)	-181 587.330	31(19 12)-31(20 11)	-138 072.320
8(0 8)-7(0 7)	106 446.510	20(0 20)-19(0 19)	256 657.790	31(19 12)-31(21 11)	-138 129.830
9(7 3)-9(7 2)	-18 969.560 ^a	22(21 1)-22(22 0)	-103 748.080 ^a	31(20 12)-31(20 11)	-138 063.360
9(2 7)-8(2 6)	144 061.990	22(21 2)-22(22 1)	-103 750.640	32(30 3)-32(31 2)	-145 533.790
10(4 6)-9(4 5)	181 770.440	22(9 14)-22(9 13)	-168 514.480	32(20 12)-32(22 11)	-137 256.360
10(5 6)-9(4 5)	181 790.820	23(22 1)-23(23 0)	-108 757.340	32(20 12)-32(21 11)	-137 134.290
10(1 9)-9(2 8)	144 039.780	23(22 2)-23(23 1)	-108 758.550	33(30 3)-33(31 2)	-141 695.530
10(8 3)-10(8 2)	-15 628.190 ^a	24(23 1)-24(24 0)	-113 766.890	33(30 4)-33(31 3)	-141 697.210
10(9 1)-9(9 0)	215 606.940	24(23 2)-24(24 1)	-113 767.610	33(21 12)-33(23 11)	-136 295.940
10(5 6)-9(5 5)	181 772.040	24(15 9)-24(16 8)	-100 631.670	33(22 12)-33(22 11)	-136 061.540
				34(31 3)-34(32 2)	-146 785.070

a. See Refs. 1 and 2.

HNO₃ by direct microwave techniques. A preliminary report of this work has been given recently (11).

II. EXPERIMENTAL DETAILS

We have previously detailed our general experimental technique (12, 13). A brief description of the specific configuration for this work follows. Millimeter-wave energy was produced by King and Gordy (14) crystal harmonic generators driven by OKI klystrons in the 35-GHz range. This energy was focused by quasi-optical techniques through a 4-m-long absorption cell made of 10-cm-diameter KIMAX glass pipe and detected by a 1.6-K InSb photoconduction detector. The HNO₃ vapor was taken directly from a standard laboratory mixture of concentrated nitric acid.

Although most of the lines reported here are strong video oscilloscope lines, source modulation and lock-in techniques were used to record the weaker high-*J* lines. For this work the 35-GHz klystron was phase locked, via a phased-locked X-13 Varian klystron and transfer oscillator, to a crystal oscillator whose phase was continuously monitored against WWVB.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We have used Watson's reduced centrifugal distortion Hamiltonian (15) and the computational and statistical techniques that we have previously discussed (16, 17) for the analysis of the rotational spectrum of HNO₃. A "bootstrap" assignment-analysis procedure was used. At each step lines that would provide a balance between a maximum of new, independent information for the analysis and a minimum risk of assignment error were selected for measurement. In practice this amounted to the selection of lines whose prediction uncertainties were several megahertz. This procedure was iterated until all of the approximately 5000 lines of significant strength below *J* = 50 were predicted with an uncertainty of 1 MHz or less.

Table I shows the 131 rotational transitions included in our analysis and Table II shows the spectral constants which result. In our analysis *H_K* was found to be only marginally determined and was subsequently eliminated from the constant set. The rms deviation of the analysis was 0.124 MHz with or without

TABLE II
Spectroscopic Constants of HNO₃ (MHz)

$a = 13\,011.0287 \pm 0.0057$	$B = 12\,099.8611 \pm 0.0057$	$C = 6\,260.6391 \pm 0.0006$
$\Delta_J = (14.038 \pm 0.026) \cdot 10^{-3}$	$\Delta_{JK} = (-20.1780 \pm 0.0037) \cdot 10^{-3}$	$\Delta_K = (7.4153 \pm 0.0108) \cdot 10^{-3}$
$\delta_J = (1.1828 \pm 0.00039) \cdot 10^{-3}$	$\delta_K = (-20.5648 \pm 0.0046) \cdot 10^{-3}$	
$H_J = (-9.84 \pm 3.82) \cdot 10^{-8}$	$H_{JK} = (-9.933 \pm 0.367) \cdot 10^{-8}$	$H_{KJ} = (1.03 \pm 0.12) \cdot 10^{-7}$
$h_J = (-9.241 \pm 0.127) \cdot 10^{-9}$	$h_{JK} = (-1.398 \pm 0.032) \cdot 10^{-7}$	$h_K = (1.135 \pm 0.027) \cdot 10^{-6}$

J= 12	64.726774 57.864929 44.257871	64.050454 54.641784 36.603659	64.022613 54.945421 36.089336	61.339109 51.320085	61.767852 48.270210	61.640233 48.270210	59.905989 44.297821
J= 17	77.923742 66.448458 50.110254	75.960871 68.484249 50.773874	75.960158 65.798423 45.561337	74.241853 62.679525 40.777966	72.595253 59.134147	72.377420 59.134147	70.737642 55.165094
J= 14	89.988821 82.347324 66.865423	87.932638 80.135028 67.477388	87.860716 77.481049 57.667423	85.998816 74.370172 52.436214	84.269641 70.830377 46.784158	83.924868 70.830377 46.784158	82.396683 66.865428
J= 15	102.020344 94.791304 79.396177 53.257853	100.633667 92.665710 75.913578 60.149156	100.602937 89.592108 70.207095	93.613116 86.591034 64.978455	97.340874 86.591079 64.978455	96.784356 83.358129 59.328611	94.883554 79.398177 53.257893
J= 16	116.718775 108.231123 92.762640 66.629513	114.262988 105.959183 88.383030 60.149156	114.259249 103.300334 83.579820	112.087379 102.241250 78.354208	110.566521 102.241207 78.354208	109.432042 96.716570 72.706954	108.199481 92.762640 66.638513
J= 17	131.383235 124.069326 108.509001 80.852901	128.750896 120.520091 102.585520 74.365899	128.757847 117.489441 97.785022 67.457928	126.423665 114.419587 92.562959	124.657488 114.419587 92.562959	123.406764 110.504802 86.918714	122.346505 106.958065 80.852901
J= 18	146.915669 136.523150 121.993647 95.600057	144.123070 135.030320 117.615320 89.419277	144.122770 132.483254 112.822091 82.510748	141.623492 129.424760 107.604157 75.184189	139.621829 129.424456 107.604157 75.184189	138.209597 125.921866 101.963393	137.327429 121.993647 95.600057
J= 19	162.313726 152.054305 137.828522 111.781109	160.354547 150.777021 133.478329 105.569836	160.353952 148.284039 128.600375 98.397060	155.464159 145.254918 123.877219 91.073039	155.464159 141.766710 117.840450 83.327919	153.952863 141.806883 117.840450 83.327919	153.145683 137.828523 111.781109
J= 20	180.575237 169.060737 154.621748 129.433613 91.889064	177.651264 164.302116 143.399128 127.010031	174.624361 164.306529 145.389183 115.116410	172.164753 161.309203 143.181525 107.795225	172.092745 158.438236 134.549342 100.052749	170.349394 158.438151 134.549342 100.052749	169.805113 154.621771 128.433613 91.889094

TABLE III—Continued

J = 21	198.708270	195.414536	192.416591	.412353	189.782134	189.724679	187.711162	187.309754
	186.238277	132.334852	182.342256	.389335	179.385444	152.082544	175.936024	172.038407
	172.038407	162.917782	162.917782	.350293	157.716419	157.082544	152.082544	146.038475
	172.038407	132.668319	132.668319		125.352293	117.610747	117.610747	109.449851
	165.667660							
J = 22	217.704319	214.243456	211.073244	1.072875	208.253622	208.218364	205.947422	205.663573
	203.244085	200.661946	200.584933	.758050	197.281187	194.255937	190.255937	190.369378
	186.039719	181.275396	181.275396	3.787768	179.081209	170.460163	164.414203	164.414203
	157.944620	151.952282	151.952282		143.737168	136.001460	136.001460	127.843359
	119.264321	110.263683	110.263683					
J = 23	237.565945	233.928168	230.600192	3.059882	227.596761	227.575626	225.063334	224.870249
	222.222127	219.628008	219.628008	16.808925	216.794229	213.400501	213.399409	209.531563
	205.215280	200.461203	200.461203	55.275145	195.275145	189.660807	189.660807	183.620491
	177.155721	170.267146	170.267146	62.957146	162.957146	155.224410	155.224410	147.069881
	138.452752	129.496129	129.496129	20.077045	120.077045			
J = 24	258.292922	254.498066	250.990963	150.990246	247.809484	247.797030	245.059964	244.932788
	242.294031	241.406316	239.464023	336.746279	236.720494	233.366023	233.363694	229.517709
	225.216747	220.474348	220.474348	115.297516	215.297516	209.690690	209.690690	203.256172
	197.197443	190.314223	190.314223	133.007931	183.007931	175.279097	175.279097	167.128217
	158.555524	149.561175	149.561175	140.145246	140.145246	130.507746	130.507746	
J = 25	275.865019	275.923012	272.247128	272.246739	268.890257	268.882977	265.935571	265.854424
	263.110173	260.425836	260.386522	357.062307	257.427321	256.651575	254.146801	250.326719
	246.033099	241.313884	241.313884	236.747454	236.747454	230.549081	230.549081	224.522165
	218.068974	211.191057	211.191057	203.882484	203.882484	196.164998	196.164998	188.018108
	179.446155	170.458358	170.458358	161.945836	161.945836	151.211640	151.211640	140.935758
J = 26	292.241959	288.212812	284.168332	294.368123	290.837746	290.833603	287.687195	287.636558
	284.733426	283.261201	281.291925	279.282474	278.933164	275.755750	275.746324	271.957071
	277.665193	272.688873	272.688873	257.324125	257.804125	252.235212	252.235212	246.316176
	249.769713	243.807660	243.807660	225.601318	225.601318	217.881564	217.881564	209.739029
	221.174144	212.187191	212.187191	182.778347	182.778347	172.947701	172.947701	162.695277
J = 27	307.676301	301.267165	301.354240	317.3541205	313.651205	313.648858	310.311780	310.289811
	290.474609	285.462888	285.463283	301.477518	298.172446	298.172446	298.159299	294.797009
	273.399084	268.463413	268.463413	248.142802	248.142802	240.428225	240.428225	235.280431
	245.722664	234.722664	234.722664	205.342287	205.342287	195.513454	195.513454	185.266732
	174.556123	163.504580	163.504580					

J = 41

742.787151	736.138186	729.765692	723.681923	717.902443	717.902433
712.443236	707.347185	702.535592	698.326633	695.277442	694.345177
692.768891	689.344266	686.745939	681.435171	676.203141	670.463638
664.245591	664.245591	657.562495	650.435964	642.867499	634.848921
634.844891	626.401565	617.252524	608.513927	598.477499	588.314497
589.314497	577.725887	569.124441	555.744690	543.413057	531.127837
531.127837	518.419225	505.207340	491.732231	477.453892	463.352268
463.352268	448.527269	433.278742	417.636547	401.510486	384.3990345
384.3990345	368.045890				

J = 42

779.041140	772.223095	765.681348	759.427803	753.477262	753.477257
747.066498	742.257102	737.677350	733.328193	729.767695	729.767691
725.767691	720.593695	716.189954	713.196304	710.991289	705.941187
695.949574	689.399574	685.333115	681.592997	677.773764	673.597988
665.775124	661.341415	653.331315	649.449164	645.449164	641.299164
632.206114	628.474116	624.474116	620.474116	616.474116	612.299164
599.314497	595.124441	590.281134	586.281134	582.427149	578.299164
566.149350	562.447382	558.447382	554.447382	550.447382	546.447382
543.447382	539.447382	535.447382	531.447382	527.447382	523.447382
500.081214	496.081214	492.081214	488.081214	484.081214	480.081214

J = 43

816.154209	809.166905	802.455937	796.032509	789.910947	789.910944
784.109910	778.654928	773.338772	768.061200	763.142889	760.642648
760.642648	755.916450	751.738242	747.507498	743.585767	740.922648
738.922438	734.763927	730.564711	726.329311	722.503288	719.503288
715.503288	711.109910	707.047111	703.199311	699.243304	695.099316
691.099316	687.185338	683.185338	679.110100	675.264335	671.994704
667.994704	664.047382	660.047382	656.047382	652.047382	648.047382
644.047382	640.047382	636.047382	632.047382	628.047382	624.047382
620.047382	616.047382	612.047382	608.047382	604.047382	600.047382
592.047382	588.047382	584.047382	580.047382	576.047382	572.047382
564.047382	560.047382	556.047382	552.047382	548.047382	544.047382
532.047382	528.047382	524.047382	520.047382	516.047382	512.047382
500.047382	496.047382	492.047382	488.047382	484.047382	480.047382
468.047382	464.047382	460.047382	456.047382	452.047382	448.047382

J = 44

854.126238	846.969410	840.089926	833.493586	827.203022	827.203020
829.203020	822.597559	816.337669	810.337669	804.403400	801.057891
801.057891	795.607317	789.674642	784.037300	778.984439	774.366027
770.462465	765.127958	760.486654	755.562880	750.952067	746.083495
742.083495	737.479958	732.836499	728.156300	723.952067	719.223646
715.223646	711.109910	707.047111	703.199311	699.243304	695.099316
691.099316	687.185338	683.185338	679.110100	675.264335	671.994704
667.994704	664.047382	660.047382	656.047382	652.047382	648.047382
644.047382	640.047382	636.047382	632.047382	628.047382	624.047382
620.047382	616.047382	612.047382	608.047382	604.047382	600.047382
592.047382	588.047382	584.047382	580.047382	576.047382	572.047382
564.047382	560.047382	556.047382	552.047382	548.047382	544.047382
532.047382	528.047382	524.047382	520.047382	516.047382	512.047382
500.047382	496.047382	492.047382	488.047382	484.047382	480.047382
468.047382	464.047382	460.047382	456.047382	452.047382	448.047382

J = 45

892.956517	885.630077	879.579954	871.816571	865.353001	865.353000
859.266073	853.038204	847.982344	842.942096	838.556018	838.556017
834.062814	828.372556	823.925726	819.155193	814.624458	814.624457
809.627244	805.256316	801.256316	797.499583	793.400728	789.426446
771.072735	767.617330	764.417330	761.261443	758.208278	755.168196
722.617330	719.476697	717.047989	714.736143	712.407394	710.133996
663.476362	661.346780	659.494989	657.849471	656.400538	655.138041
593.731978	592.512300	591.452300	590.468911	589.500538	588.642041
513.395037	512.300446	511.355214	510.468911	509.642041	508.810139
441.486863	440.605214	440.005214	439.290749	438.601684	438.010139

H_K as a variable. The spectral constants have been used to generate the energy levels shown in Table III. Because of the large number of rotational lines, the calculated spectrum is not reproduced here. It is available either from the Editorial Office of this Journal or from the second author.

An important point should be made about the use of these data in conjunction with other data sets, especially infrared rotation-vibration data sets. Although accurate ground-state energy levels are a convenient starting point for spectra assignments, from a statistical point of view it is preferable to use the observed microwave data directly in the final spectral analysis. The appropriate weightings for data are then reasonably straightforward. On the other hand, if energy levels or spectral constants are used, the appropriate statistical treatment requires the consideration of both the uncertainties in the spectral constants and in the correlation matrix (18). This is especially important in large centrifugal distortion analyses because of the significant correlations among the constants.

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