

Received: 30 August 2017 Accepted: 23 January 2018

Published online: 05 February 2018

OPEN Genetic characteristics and phylogenetic analysis of three Chinese ethnic groups using the **Huaxia Platinum System**

Mengge Wang¹, Zheng Wang¹, Guanglin He¹, Zhenjun Jia², Jing Liu¹ & Yiping Hou¹

Short tandem repeats (STRs) are attractive to genetic applications like forensic, anthropological and population genetics studies. The Huaxia Platinum System was specifically developed to allow co-amplification and detection of all markers in the expanded CODIS core loci and the Chinese National Database. In this study, in continuation to our previous validation study, 568 unrelated individuals were firstly genotyped to investigate the effectiveness of this novel assay in 3 main ethnic groups of China (Han, Tibetan and Yi). The combined power of discrimination 0.99999999999999999999999, respectively, and the combined power of exclusion (CPE) were 0.999999999, 0.999999995, 0.999999998, respectively. Next, genetic relationships along administrative and ethnic divisions were analyzed using pairwise genetic distances, multidimensional scaling (MDS), principal component analysis (PCA) and phylogenetic analysis. The Han ethnicity showed a high genetic homogeneity all across China, and significant genetic differences existed between Han groups and some minority groups, most prominently for the Tibetans, the Uyghurs, the Kazakhs, the Miaos, the Zhuangs and the Dais. Aforementioned results suggested that the Huaxia Platinum System is polymorphic and informative, which provides an efficient tool not only for human forensics, but also for population genetics studies.

Short tandem repeats (STRs) are DNA fragments with a variable number of tandemly repeated short (2-6 bp) sequence motifs, such as (GATA)n¹. STR genotyping has now been applied in various aspects of human identification in forensic investigations for nearly 30 years^{2,3}. Recently, to minimize adventitious matches and to facilitate data sharing, the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) was upgraded from 13 loci to 20 loci (i.e. the expanded CODIS)⁴, while a parallel process occurred in China where 20 loci are required for uploading DNA profiles to the Chinese National Database (CND), the world's biggest DNA databases^{5,6}. However, 6 non-overlapped loci exist between the expanded CODIS and the CND^{6,7}. The Huaxia Platinum System (Thermo Fisher Scientific, MA, USA) is a 25-locus, six-dye, multiplex that allows co-amplification and fluorescent detection of the 23 autosomal loci (D1S1656, D2S1338, D2S441, D3S1358, D5S818, D7S820, D8S1179, D10S1248, D12S391, D13S317, D16S539, D18S51, D19S433, D21S11, D22S1045, D6S1043, CSF1PO, FGA, TH01, TPOX, VWA, Penta D and Penta E) including all the recommended core loci in the expanded CODIS and the CND as well as Amelogenin and Y-InDel (rs2032678) for gender determination8. Our previous validation study demonstrated that this novel assay is robust, sensitive, specific and reliable, and forensic parameters is polymorphic and informative in three main ethnic groups of China, Sichuan Han, Xinjiang Uygur and Tibet Tibetan⁷.

China, the world's most populous country and the world's second-largest state by land area, emerged as one of the world's earliest civilizations in the fertile basin of the Yellow River in the North China Plain. The nation officially recognizes 56 distinct ethnic groups, widely disseminated in 34 administrative regions, and the population substructure is further complicated 9,10. The Han population, accounting for 92% of the total population in China, is widely distributed in mainland territory of China. The Yi people are a typical ethnic minority in China and the

¹Institute of Forensic Medicine, West China School of Basic Science and Forensic Medicine, Sichuan University, Chengdu, 610041, China. ² Department of Criminal Science and Technology, People's Public Security University of China, Beijing, 100038, China. Mengge Wang and Zheng Wang contributed equally to this work. Correspondence and requests for materials should be addressed to Y.H. (email: profhou@yahoo.com)

largest ethnic minority group in Sichuan Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. Most of them live in mountainous regions and often carve out their existence on the sides of steep mountain slopes. The Tibetan is one of the oldest peoples in China and South Asia and Tibetan population mainly reside throughout the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau for hundreds of generations, and has genetic adaptations of distinct combinations of phenotype in high-altitude (>4000 m). With economic growth and traffic development, some Tibetans began to migrate to plain areas. Sichuan is home to a large community of Tibetans, with 30,000 permanent Tibetan residents and up to 200,000 Tibetan floating population.

In continuation to our previous studies^{7,11}, the present study characterizes the genetic diversity of the Huaxia Platinum System in 3 main ethnic groups of China (193 Hainan Hans, 198 Sichuan Tibetans and 177 Sichuan Yis). Additionally, genetic data of our present investigated individuals and other previously studied 56 Chinese populations^{7,11-44} were used to investigate genetic relationships along administrative and ethnic divisions.

Results and Discussion

Genetic parameters of the Huaxia Platinum System. Hainan, separated by the Qiongzhou Strait from the Leizhou Peninsula of Guangdong, is the smallest and southernmost province of China. The population density of Hainan is low compared to most Chinese coastal provinces. This study was carried out to provide the first batch of 23 STRs data of Hainan Han population (193 unrelated individuals) using the Huaxia Platinum System. Meanwhile, we continue to evaluate the forensic efficiency of this novel assay for application in 2 main ethnic groups in Sichuan. Sichuan consists of two geographically distinct parts: the eastern part is mostly within the fertile Sichuan basin and the western part consists of the numerous mountain range. Han Chinese, the majority of the province's population, mainly reside in the eastern portion, while significant minorities of Yi and Tibetan people reside in the western portion that are impacted by inclement weather and natural disasters. Sichuan Han have been investigated in our previous studies¹¹, in the present study Sichuan Yi (177 unrelated individuals) and Tibetan people (198 unrelated individuals) were analyzed.

No significant deviation from Hardy-Weinberg disequilibrium was observed (Table 1) and no significant deviations from linkage disequilibrium between pairwise STR loci after Bonferroni correction in 3 main ethnic groups (Supplementary Tables 1–3). The allele frequency distributions are listed in Supplementary Tables 4–6 and forensic parameters including observed heterozygosity (Ho), expected heterozygosity (He), power of discrimination (PD), power of exclusion (PE) and typical paternity index (TPI) for each locus are presented in Table 1.

Population pairwise differences. The different nationalities of China were widely distributed in 34 administrative divisions, and the population substructure was complicated. In order to illuminate the genetic affinity among different nationalities, population comparisons were performed between our three studied groups and 56 previously investigated populations (40 Han populations, 15 ethnic minorities as well as Vietnamese of Yunnan). The Locus-by-Locus F_{st} and corresponding p values showed that statistically significant differences were observed between Hainan Han and Yunnan Miao at 11 loci, between Yunnan Vietnamese at 6 loci, and between Xinjiang Uyghur at 4 loci after Bonferroni adjustment (p < 0.00004) (Supplementary Table 8). As showed in Supplementary Tables 9–10, after Bonferroni correction (p < 0.00004), statistically significant genetic differentiations were found between Sichuan Yi and Yunnan Miao at 10 loci, between Yunnan Vietnamese at 7 loci, and between Inner Mongolia at 4 loci. Genetic differences were existed between Sichuan Tibetan and Yunnan Miao at 10 loci, between Yunnan Vietnamese at 9 loci, and between Taiwan Han at 3 loci.

Principal component analysis. Principal component analysis among the 59 groups was carried out been prepared on the basis of allele frequency distributions of 19 STR loci. As displayed in Fig. 1, the first principal component, the second principal component and the third principal component account for 30.63%, 15.50%, and 13.95% of the total variance, respectively, which can clearly differentiate the Tibetan, Uyghur, Kazakh, Miao and Vietnamese with other groups, but Han Chinese populations residing in different administrative regions were conglomerated together, which revealed that the genetic similarity was widely existed among Han Chinese populations distributed in different administrative divisions.

Multidimensional scaling analysis. To further explore the genetic diversity and phylogenetic characteristic among Chinese populations, Nei's standard genetic distances were calculated among 59 Chinese populations and presented in Supplementary Table 11. The largest genetic distances were observed between Miao and our three investigated groups: Hainan Han, Sichuan Yi, Sichuan Tibetan ($R_{st} = 0.0940$, $R_{st} = 0.1103$ and $R_{st} = 0.1442$,

Populations	FP	D3S1358	vWA	D16S539	CSF1PO	TPOX	D8S1179	D21S11	D18S51	Penta E	D2S441	D19S433	TH01
	PD	0.8594	0.9176	0.9108	0.8849	0.8028	0.9525	0.9404	0.9574	0.9840	0.9034	0.9486	0.8605
	PE	0.4519	0.5762	0.6740	0.4686	0.2290	0.6944	0.7149	0.7460	0.8411	0.5390	0.6440	0.4039
Han	TPI	1.7545	2.3537	3.1129	1.8208	1.0966	3.3276	3.5741	4.0208	6.4333	2.1444	2.8382	1.5820
	Но	0.7165	0.7887	0.8402	0.7268	0.5412	0.8505	0.8608	0.8763	0.9227	0.7680	0.8247	0.6856
	Не	0.7178	0.7894	0.7845	0.7414	0.6233	0.8486	0.8253	0.8583	0.9233	0.7614	0.8281	0.6939
	P	0.0779	0.5427	0.4334	0.3094	0.0021	0.1146	0.5211	0.1915	0.7198	0.0916	0.9417	0.0209
Yi	PD	0.8374	0.9216	0.9255	0.8577	0.7927	0.9458	0.9486	0.9596	0.9794	0.9321	0.9410	0.8411
	PE	0.4317	0.5440	0.5440	0.4145	0.3894	0.6371	0.7475	0.6696	0.6587	0.5050	0.6587	0.3060
	TPI	1.6792	2.1707	2.1707	1.6182	1.5345	2.7813	4.0455	3.0690	2.9667	1.9778	2.9667	1.2899
	Но	0.7006	0.7684	0.7684	0.6893	0.6780	0.8192	0.8757	0.8362	0.8305	0.7458	0.8305	0.6158
	Не	0.6892	0.8010	0.7977	0.7006	0.6327	0.8333	0.8394	0.8488	0.9111	0.7977	0.8232	0.6635
	P	0.3459	0.2120	0.2491	0.6302	0.1564	0.2955	0.9337	0.9654	0.0011	0.1947	0.4908	0.2176
Tibetan	PD	0.8523	0.9239	0.8979	0.8851	0.7677	0.9409	0.9422	0.9284	0.9841	0.9013	0.9494	0.8367
	PE	0.3260	0.5879	0.4739	0.4416	0.2227	0.5695	0.6349	0.6349	0.6737	0.5337	0.6254	0.3810
	TPI	1.3446	2.4268	1.8426	1.7155	1.0815	2.3140	2.7639	2.7639	3.1094	2.1170	2.6892	1.5076
	Но	0.6263	0.7929	0.7273	0.7071	0.5404	0.7828	0.8182	0.8232	0.8384	0.7677	0.8131	0.6717
	Не	0.6877	0.7970	0.7486	0.7381	0.5878	0.8180	0.8286	0.8083	0.9207	0.7564	0.8344	0.6584
		0.1167	0.4993	0.2084	0.4716	0.0636	0.4067	0.2367	0.0195	0.0853	0.6143	0.3738	0.9015
	p	0.1167	0.4993	0.2004	0.4710	0.0030	0.4007	0.2307	0.0173	0.0055	0.0143	0.5750	0.7013
Populations	р FP	FGA	D22S1045	D5S818	D13S317	D7S820	D6S1043	D10S1248	D1S1656	D12S391	D2S1338	Penta D	0.5015
Populations		-											0.5015
Populations	FP	FGA	D22S1045	D5S818	D13S317	D7S820	D6S1043	D10S1248	D1S1656	D12S391	D2S1338	Penta D	0.5015
•	FP PD	FGA 0.9668	D22S1045 0.9116	D5S818 0.9208	D13S317 0.9330	D7S820 0.9084	D6S1043 0.9666	D10S1248 0.9067	D1S1656 0.9514	D12S391 0.9540	D2S1338 0.9635	Penta D 0.9231	0.5015
Populations Han	FP PD PE	FGA 0.9668 0.6640	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952	0.5015
•	FP PD PE TPI	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744	0.5013
•	FP PD PE TPI Ho	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938	0.5013
•	FP PD PE TPI Ho	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756	0.5013
•	FP PD PE TPI Ho Pe	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349	D1\$1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459	0.5013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho He P	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275	0.0013
•	FP PD PE TPI Ho Pe PD PE	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805	0.5013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho Pe PD TPI TPI TPI	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786	0.0013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho He P PD PE TPI Ho Ho	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627	0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418	0.0013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho PP PD PE TPI Ho PH PD PE TPI Ho	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023 0.8545	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853 0.7650	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853 0.7802	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627 0.8118	0.9084 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8816	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797 0.7590	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966 0.8233	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249 0.8461	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8547	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418 0.7971	0.0013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho PE PD PE TPI Ho PE TPI PE TPI PO PE	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023 0.8545 0.0277	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853 0.7650 0.9585	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853 0.7802 0.3853	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627 0.8118 0.3815	0.9084 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079 0.8033 0.5358	D6S1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8816 0.0039	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797 0.7590 0.4065	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966 0.8233 0.3372	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249 0.8461 0.5038	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8547 0.2368	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418 0.7971 0.7628	0.0013
Han Yi	FP PD PE TPI Ho PP	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023 0.8545 0.0277 0.9598	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853 0.7650 0.9585 0.8888	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853 0.7802 0.3853 0.9100	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627 0.8118 0.3815 0.9278	0.9084 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079 0.8033 0.5358	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8816 0.0039 0.9684	D10S1248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797 0.7590 0.4065 0.8904	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966 0.8233 0.3372 0.9360	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249 0.8461 0.5038 0.9478	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8547 0.2368 0.9517	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418 0.7971 0.7628 0.9360	0.0013
Han	FP PD PE TPI Ho PP PD PE TPI Ho PP PD PE TPI Ho PP	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023 0.8545 0.0277 0.9598 0.6835	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853 0.7650 0.9585 0.8888 0.5249	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853 0.7802 0.3853 0.9100 0.4906	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627 0.8118 0.3815 0.9278 0.7333	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079 0.8033 0.5358 0.9219 0.5695	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8816 0.0039 0.9684 0.6934	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797 0.7590 0.4065 0.8904 0.5076	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966 0.8233 0.3372 0.9360 0.4906	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249 0.8461 0.5038 0.9478 0.6737	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8547 0.2368 0.9517	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418 0.7971 0.7628 0.9360 0.5695	0.0013
Han Yi	FP PD PE TPI Ho PP PD PE TPI Ho PP TPI FO PE TPI TPI TPI TPI TPI TPI	FGA 0.9668 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8692 0.2273 0.9579 0.5949 2.4722 0.8023 0.8545 0.0277 0.9598 0.6835 3.2097	D22S1045 0.9116 0.5482 2.1932 0.7732 0.7759 0.9367 0.8988 0.5743 2.3421 0.7853 0.7650 0.9585 0.8888 0.5249 2.0729	D5S818 0.9208 0.6243 2.6806 0.8144 0.7917 0.9618 0.9124 0.5641 2.2821 0.7853 0.7802 0.3853 0.9100 0.4906 1.9135	D13S317 0.9330 0.4857 1.8922 0.7371 0.8055 0.0675 0.9376 0.5341 2.1190 0.7627 0.8118 0.3815 0.9278 0.7333 3.8269	D7S820 0.9084 0.5299 2.0978 0.7629 0.7689 0.4617 0.9280 0.6158 2.6176 0.8079 0.8033 0.5358 0.9219 0.5695 2.3140	D6\$1043 0.9666 0.7669 4.3864 0.8866 0.8744 0.4772 0.9693 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8816 0.0039 0.9684 0.6934 3.3167	D1081248 0.9067 0.5209 2.0532 0.7577 0.7650 0.8349 0.8984 0.5641 2.2821 0.7797 0.7590 0.4065 0.8904 0.5076 1.9900	D1S1656 0.9514 0.6640 3.0156 0.8351 0.8435 0.0951 0.9410 0.5845 2.4054 0.7966 0.8233 0.3372 0.9360 0.4906 1.9135	D12S391 0.9540 0.7149 3.5741 0.8608 0.8527 0.1252 0.9535 0.6478 2.8710 0.8249 0.8461 0.5038 0.9478 0.6737 3.1094	D2S1338 0.9635 0.7564 4.1957 0.8814 0.8708 0.3016 0.9580 0.6587 2.9667 0.8305 0.8547 0.2368 0.9517 0.6047 2.5385	Penta D 0.9231 0.5952 2.4744 0.7938 0.7756 0.4459 0.9275 0.6805 3.1786 0.8418 0.7971 0.7628 0.9360 0.5695 2.3140	

Table 1. Forensic parameters for 23 autosomal STR loci of the Huaxia Platinum system in three Chinese ethnic groups. FP: forensic parameters; PD: power of discrimination; PIC: polymorphism information content; PE: probability of exclusion; TPI: Typical Paternity Index; Ho: observed heterozygosity; He: expected heterozygosity; p: probability values of exact tests for Hardy–Weinberg equilibrium.

respectively), while Guangzhou Han is the most closely related to Hainan Han (Rst = 0.0107), Shanghai Han is the most closely related to Sichuan Yi (R_{st} = 0.0116), and Yunnan Bai is the closest to Sichuan Tibetan (R_{st} = 0.0199).

Furthermore, evolutionary relationships among 59 Chinese populations were inferred from MDS (Supplementary Fig. 1) on the basis of genetic distance matrix. As shown in Supplementary Fig. 1, 12 out of 59 populations (3 Xinjiang Uyghurs, Xinjiang Kazakh, Sichuan Tibetan, Tibet Tibetan, Yunnan Miao, Yunnan Vietnamese, Yunnan Dai, Yunnan Zhuang, Yunnan Yi, Yunnan Hani) were isolated and fall into the surrounding of MDS plots, and other populations were clustered together. For the sake of further ascertaining the genetic differentiation between our three investigated populations with the 40 reference Han populations, and with previously reported ethnic minorities, the other two MDS scatter diagrams were illustrated based on genetic distances values (Fig. 2).

As shown in Fig. 2A, genetic divergence has existed between the two studied ethnic minorities Sichuan Yi, Sichuan Tibetan and Chinese Han populations distributed in different administrative regions obviously, and subtle differentiation was found between the Hainan Han and other Han Chinese populations. The findings were in line with the results of PCA. The visualization of Nei's genetic distances values between our investigated nationalities and reference ethnic minority groups (Fig. 2B) demonstrated that there were significant differences among different minorities. Additionally, our research objects Sichuan Tibetan, Hainan Han clearly separated with other groups, the Sichuan Yi clustered with Yunan Bai.

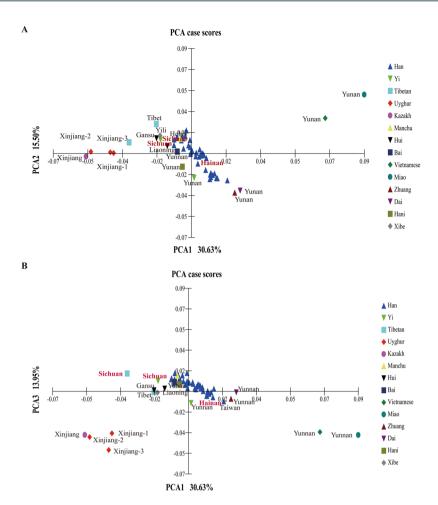


Figure 1. Principal component analysis based on 19 overlapped STR loci of our studied populations (bold and red) and 46 reference Chinese Han populations.

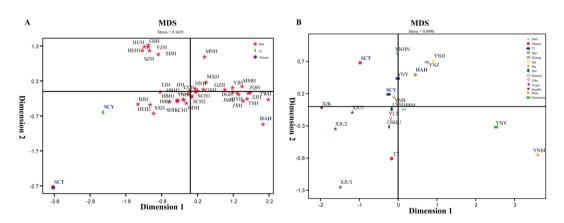


Figure 2. Multidimensional Scaling plots (MDS) constructed based on Nei's genetic distances calculated by allele frequency distributions of 19 overlapped autosomal STRs. (**A**) MDS of our studied populations (bold and blue) and 40 reference Chinese Han populations (the information of abbreviations are presented in Supplementary Table 12). (**B**) MDS of our studied populations (bold and blue) and 16 reference ethnic minorities (the information of abbreviations are presented in Supplementary Table 12).

Phylogenetic relationship analysis. To further explore the phylogenetic characteristics among Chinese populations, a phylogenetic tree was constructed using the neighbor-joining method. In the dendrogram (Fig. 3), two main clusters were clearly identified: one consisted of Yunnan Miao and Yunnan Vietnamese, and the other comprised 57 populations clustered together. Our investigated Hainan Han grouped with geographically

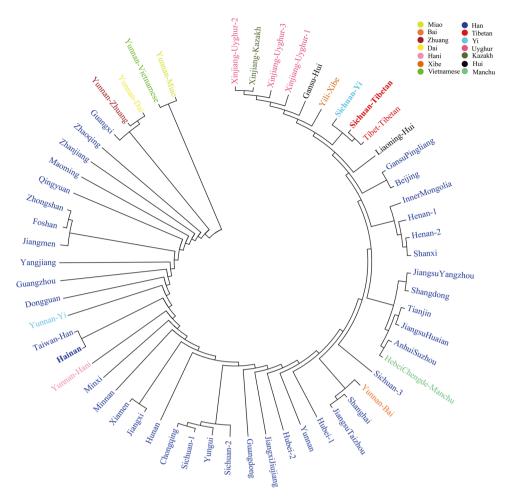


Figure 3. Phylogenetic tree among three studied populations (red and bold) and 56 reference populations. Phylogenetic tree was constructed by the Neighbor-Joining method based on 19 overlapped STR loci in the Mega 7.0 software.

ethnically close population Taiwan Han, Sichuan Tibetan first clustered with Tibet Tibetan and then clustered with Sichuan Yi. The phylogenetic structure revealed by Nei's genetic distance matrix was in conformity with the characteristics revealed by PCA and MDS, which also in line with the results obtained in our previous researches based on Y-Chromosomal and X-Chromosomal genetic markers⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷.

To make a comprehensive population comparison based on autosomal genetic markers, we investigated the genetic variations in 568 unrelated individuals by using 23 autosomal STR loci and explored genetic relationships among 59 Chinese groups distributed in different administrative regions. Genetic data presented here provide basic information on the ethnic and geographical population differentiation required by the forensic genetics. Genetic differences within ethnicities were usually of minor magnitude, especially the Han nationality, which, despite their large sample size, showed a prominent genetic homogeneity. In this study, a genetic distinction between Northern and Southern Han⁴⁸ or a North-South gradient genetic difference¹⁰ based on Y chromosomal genetic data has not been observed. It's explicable that Y chromosome has the features of without recombination between loci and isolation-by-distance model, and in modern times, huge migrations of the Han might have further contributed to a homogeneity of the genetic landscape of China. We observed substantial genetic divergences among some ethnic groups, most notably Tibetans, Uyghurs, Kazakh, Miao, Vietnamese and Dai, and most other ethnicities. It's explainable by different ancestries as well as special geographical and cultural background. Moreover, in order to provide more information for population genetics studies, more in-depth statistical analysis of our genetic data and larger sample sizes of some ethnicities are needed in future studies.

Conclusions

In summary, we provided the first batch of genetic polymorphism data of Hainan Han, Sichuan Yi and Sichuan Tibetan using 23 autosomal STR loci included in the Huaxia Platinum System. The results of forensic characteristics demonstrated that this new 25-plex multiplex system is highly polymorphic and informative in the studied populations and can be employed as a powerful tool for forensic applications. The inter-population comparisons, PCA, MDS and phylogenetic analysis manifested that no significant genetic distinction was found between northern and southern Han Chinese populations, but subtle divergence was observed between Hainan Han and other Han populations. And the inter-population comparisons, PCA, MDS and phylogenetic analysis consistently

demonstrated that significant genetic differentiation was existed between minority ethnic groups (particularly in Sichuan Tibetan, Tibet Tibetan, Xinjiang Uyghur, Xinjiang Kazakh, Yunnan Miao, Yunnan Vietnamese, Yunnan Zhuang and Yunnan Dai) and Han populations. The results of genetic population substructure pattern can happen for the reasons of large-scale population migration, ethnic intermarriage, random mating and gene flow among different ethnicities or one nationality from distinct geographic regions.

Methods

Ethics Statement. Human blood samples were collected upon approval of the Ethics Committee at the Institute of Forensic Medicine, Sichuan University. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant. All the methods were carried out in accordance with the approved guidelines of Institute of Forensic Medicine, Sichuan University. This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Sichuan University (Approval Number: K2015008).

Sample preparation. 568 peripheral blood samples were collected from 193 unrelated Han Chinese recruited from Hainan Province, 177 unrelated Yi Chinese recruited from Sichuan Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture and 198 Tibetan Chinese recruited from Sichuan Province.

Human genomic DNA was extracted using the Purelink Genomic DNA Mini Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The quantity of the DNA template was determined using Quantifiler Human DNA Quantification Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific) on a 7500 Real-time PCR System (Thermo Fisher Scientific). DNA samples were then normalized to 1.0 $\text{ng}/\mu\text{l}$ and stored at $-20\,^{\circ}\text{C}$ until amplification.

Amplification and genotyping. PCR amplification was performed with 27 PCR cycles in a ProFlex PCR System (Thermo Fisher Scientific) following the manufacturer's protocol. Amplification products were separated and detected on an Applied Biosystems 3500 Genetic Analyzers using POP-4 polymer and 36 cm capillary array according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Allele allocation was carried out with GeneMapper ID-X v.1.4 software (Thermo Fisher Scientific) using the allelic ladder and the set of bins and panels provided by the manufacturer.

Population studies. To evaluate the forensic efficiency of this novel STR system for application in 3 main ethnic groups of China, genotype data of 568 unrelated individuals including 193 Han, 177 Yi and 198 Tibetan were analyzed. Population indices including allele frequency, heterozygosity, Hardy–Weinberg equilibrium (HWE) and the possible presence of linkage disequilibrium (LD) among loci pairs were obtained using Arlequin software v3.5.2.2⁴⁹. Forensic parameters were estimated by calculating power of discrimination (PD), power of exclusion (PE) and typical paternity index (TPI) using modified PowerStats V12 spreadsheet (Promega)⁵⁰.

Furthermore, to further investigate the phylogenetic relationships among Chinese populations, a comprehensive population comparison among 59 groups $^{7,11-44}$ was conducted using Locus-by-Locus comparisons (F_{st}) based on 19 overlapping STR loci (D2S1338, D3S1358, D5S818, D6S1043, D7S820, D8S1179, D12S391, D13S317, D16S539, D18S51, D19S433, D21S11, CSF1PO, FGA, Penta D, Penta E, TH01, TPOX, VWA) following Slatkin's linearized F_{st} . The pairwise F_{st} 's can be used as short-term genetic distances between populations, with the application of a slight transformation to linearize the distance with population divergence time. The detailed information and abbreviations of aforementioned populations are shown in Supplementary Table 12. The Principal component analysis scatter plot was depicted by MVSP v3.22 software 52 and multidimensional scaling analysis (MDS) was conducted in SPSS software (IBM SPSS, version 19.0, Chicago). Unbiased estimate of Nei's standard pairwise genetic distance was calculated using the Phylip3.695 package. A neighbor-joining phylogenetic tree was delineated in the Molecular Evolutionary Genetics Analysis 7.0 (MEGA 7.0) software 53 .

Quality control. Control DNA 007 (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and ddH_2O were used as positive and negative controls respectively for each batch of amplification and genotyping. All experiments were conducted at the Forensic Genetics Laboratory of Institute of Forensic Medicine, Sichuan University, which is an accredited laboratory (ISO 17025), in accordance with quality control measures. Additionally, the laboratory has been accredited by the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS).

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Acknowledgements

This study was supported by grants from National Key R&D Program of China (2016YFC0800703), the National Natural Science Foundation of China (81330073 and 81501635) and the funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript.

Author Contributions

M.W. and Z.W. wrote the manuscript, G.H. and Z.J. collected the samples, M.W. and J.L. conducted the experiment, Z.W., and M.W. analyzed the results, Z.W. and Y.H. conceived the experiment. All authors reviewed the manuscript.

Additional Information

Supplementary information accompanies this paper at https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-20871-7.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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