

**To:** Script Ad Hoc and Unicode Technical Committee  
**From:** Manvir Singh  
**Subject:** Response to Script Ad Hoc re: L2/18-319 on Bindi before Bihari in Gurmukhi  
**Date:** 12 February 2019  
**Document:**

Below are responses to the questions posed in the Script Ad Hoc Recommendations in [L2/19-047](#) to the following document: [L2/18-319](#) Proposal for Bindi before Bihari in Gurmukhi – Singh

- What does the placement of BINDI *before* the VOWEL SIGN II mean versus its position *after* the VOWEL SIGN II? Is this just an orthographic variation, an error, a personal font preference, or does the different placement have different meaning? (It was noted that in [L2/05-088](#), the author Sukhjinder Sidhu states in section A2 on page 3 that the difference is stylistic.)

This is generally known as just a stylistic difference, though I have heard people that pronounce it a bit differently (I'll elaborate on that on the last answer).

- Visually, the BINDI and TIPPI appear over a consonant (when appearing before the VOWEL SIGN II). Do they ever occur over a vowel letter or vowel carrier besides IRI? If so, provide examples.

I do know that some claim that certain uses of Kanaura (GURMUKHI VOWEL SIGN AU) in SGGS (Sri Guru Granth Sahib) was actually a Bindi under a Hora (GURMUKHI VOWEL SIGN OO) in some old manuscripts, hence would change the meaning of some words if that is the case. Though this claim isn't too main stream, it at least shows the potential for Bindi before another vowel.

For the purpose of digitalizing SGGS, only Bindi before Bihari is needed, but I don't see any reason why this couldn't be generalized to avoid the need for another proposal in the future.


- Provide examples showing contrastive use of the two marks before and after VOWEL SIGN II, and discuss.

For example, what is the difference between the following?

BINDI

(page 403)  vs. (page 439) 

Though generally, Bindi before or after Bihari would be pronounced the same, I have heard some (and even entertained the idea myself), that in the example of the hymn from SGGS that contains many

example of Bindi after Bihari like , that putting the Bindi before would change the pronunciation to not only make the GURMUKHI LETTER II nasal, but also make the Kanna (GURMUKHI VOWEL SIGN AA) nasal as well (kind of as a shorthand without have to write Bindi over and over again). This does make some sense given how such words are pronounced in modern Panjabi (where the nasal sound does often expand through consecutive vowels)

TIPPI

ਕੀ

(page 396)

vs. (provide an example of TIPPI appearing after the vowel)

I am not really aware of any examples of TIPPI occurring after Bihari, though I could see it being a possibility.

Another thing I'd like to note is that Bindi and Tippi are sometimes interchangeable as both are used for nasal sounds. I have personally seen manuscripts that only contain Bindi, so every place a Tippi would appear, a Bindi appears instead (ie: all occurrences of ਬਸੰਤ show as ਬਸੰਤ). But in other cases, they aren't interchangeable, like in poetry-strict texts where Tippi is used with short vowels and turn them into long vowels and Bindis are used with either short or long vowels and add no length to the given vowels (ie: short vowels stay short).

The reason I mention this is that I could see the possibility of using Tippi in place of Bindi in a word

ਕੀ

like (as opposed to ਕੀ) making the sound of a Bihari longer as it would be conventionally be if a Bindi was used. The possibility of things like this is why the Sikh community would be reluctant to adopt Unicode for use in Sri Guru Granth Sahib until these issues are taken care of.

I hope this helps you. Let me know if you have any more questions or concerns.