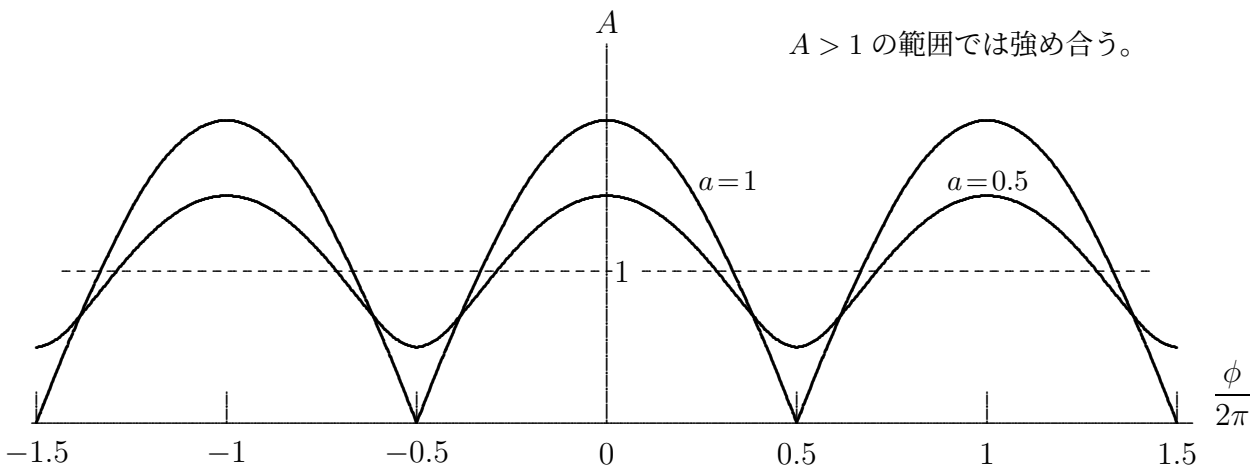
$$
\begin{aligned}
\cos(\omega t - kx) + a\cos(\omega t - kx - \phi) &= (1 + a\cos\phi)\cos(\omega t - kx) + a\sin\phi\sin(\omega t - kx) \\
&= A\ \cos(\omega t - kx - \phi')
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
A = \sqrt{1 + 2a\cos\phi + a^2}\ , \quad \phi' = \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{a\sin\phi}{1 + a\cos\phi}\right)
$$