

Math Diversion 1001

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It is not enough to be in the right place at the
right time. You should also have an open
mind at the right time.
— Paul Erdős

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJeDWfsgS9Y>
Title: This Quadratic Leads to a Wild Power! 1 P590
Presenter: aplusbi

1 Problem

Given the relation

$$z^2 + 2z + 2 = 0, \tag{1}$$

find the values of

$$\phi = z^{11} + z^{-11}. \tag{2}$$

Look for solutions whose argument lies between 0 and 2π .

2 Solution

We can use the quadratic formula to solve for the roots to (1)

$$z_{\pm} = -1 \pm i = -\sqrt{2} \frac{1 \pm i}{\sqrt{2}}. \tag{3}$$

But we can rewrite z into polar form:

$$z_{\pm} = -\sqrt{2} e^{\pm\pi i/4}. \tag{4}$$

So then

$$\begin{aligned}\phi &= z_{\pm}^{11} + z_{\pm}^{-11} \\ &= (-\sqrt{2}e^{\pm\pi i/4})^{11} + (-\sqrt{2}e^{\pm\pi i/4})^{-11} \\ &= -2^{11/2}[e^{\pm 11\pi i/4}] + -2^{11/2}[e^{\mp 11\pi i/4}] \\ &= -2^{11/2}[e^{11\pi i/4} + e^{-11\pi i/4}] \\ &= -2^{11/2}[e^{-\pi i/4} + e^{\pi i/4}] \\ &= -2^{11/2}2\frac{e^{-\pi i/4} + e^{\pi i/4}}{2} \\ &= -2^{13/2} \cos \pi/4 \\ &= -2^{13/2} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ &= -2^{12/2} = -2^6 = -64.\end{aligned}\tag{5}$$

However, this is not the answer that either the Presenter or WolframAlpha got, so it seems that my answer is wrong. Perhaps you can find the error.