Theoretical syntactic research on cognate objects (COs) focuses on the question of whether cognate objects are arguments or adjuncts (among many others, Massam 1990, Hale & Keyser 1993, 1997, Macfarland 1995, Matsumoto 1996, Pham 1999 vs. Zubizarreta 1987, Jones 1988, Moltmann 1989). Greek has figured prominently in the discussion (cf. Bary & De Swart 2005, Horrocks & Stavrou 2010). Research has investigated primarily COs in the accusative case, and the existence of different subclasses of COs, some qualifying as arguments and some as adjunct modifiers, has been proposed. In this paper, we will discuss an understudied phenomenon, COs marked with dative case in Ancient and Hellenistic Greek, and argue that alternation in case morphology at these stages indicates a further distinction between two types of adjunct COs: focused adverbial COs and non-focused adverbial COs (for manner modification; always with a modifier), with different syntactic properties. That is, Greek, as other languages (cf. Pereltsvaig 2002 for Hebrew, Pereltsvaig 1999 for Russian), has both argument and adjunct COs. Accusative marked COs can be either arguments or adjuncts (cf. Horrocks & Stavrou 2010, who have argued that at least some Ancient Greek COs are analysable as adverbial adjuncts, i.e. accusatives of ‘respect/extant’); dative marked COs, on the other hand, can only be adjuncts, and differ from accusative adjunct COs in their information-structural status: they are always focused.

(1) ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν μεθ’ ὑμῶν πρὸ τοῦ με παθεῖν (Luke 22:15)
‘I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer’

(2) παραγγελίᾳ παρηγγείλαμεν ὑμῖν μὴ διδάσκειν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ (Acts 5:28)
‘We strictly charged you not to teach in this name’

(3) οὔ νύν τοι ἀεικὲς οὐδὲν ἦν τοῦ σώματος νοῦσον μεγάλην νοσέοντος μηδὲ τὰς φρένας ὑγιαίνειν (Herodotus 3.33)
‘It is not unlikely then that when his body was grievously afflicted his mind too should be diseased’

With our proposal, we set Greek into the crosslinguistic sample of languages that exhibit, with different functions, case alternation in the domain of COs. In languages where morphological case is available (as in Russian, Icelandic, Old English, and Ancient Greek) focused adverbial COs are non-accusative: e.g., instrumental in Russian, dative in Greek. For Greek, case marking alternation between focused and non-focused adverbial COs supports the hypothesis that the two COs are in two different structural positions.

We will examine the different syntactic diagnostics (e.g. modification, word order) to distinguish between focused and non-focused COs across a diachronic corpus of Greek, taking into account also other changing factors, such as object preposing and verb position in the clause. With regard to the diachronic changes, the reduction of COs in the history of Greek (Horrocks & Stavrou 2010) can be explained through the loss of the type of focused adverbial COs; dative cognate objects have been lost but not replaced (similar to other dative NPs in other functions) by other cases or PPs.