

CHAPTER EIGHT



Time and Space in the Writings of Marinetti, Palazzeschi, the Group of *L'Italia futurista*, and Other Futurist Writers

BEATRICE SICA

In this chapter I explore the relationship between Futurism and time in creative writing.¹ In the first part I deal with Marinetti's claims on time as found in the *Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism* (1909), the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* (1912), and *Destruction of Syntax—Imagination without Strings—Words-in-Freedom* (1913).² In the second part I consider time both as a theme and a technical writing issue in various pieces by different futurist authors. This is also an opportunity to present a selection of texts—some of which have not been translated into English before—on the subject, a sort of chrestomathy of Futurism on time. In the end I argue that despite Marinetti's one-sided theoretical prescriptions for creating a new, swift literature, the practice of futurist writers was multifaceted and allowed for different writing and reading speeds. Indeed, Marinetti, far from imposing a style, was able to promote a varied range of creative production and with his passionate calls brought together different writers in the name of literary playfulness and experimentation.

Time and Space Died Yesterday

The foundational manifesto of Futurism (*Fondazione e manifesto del futurismo*) makes a very clear and radical point, among others: "Time and space died yesterday."³ The claim appears amidst other assertions only in the

