**Sujet type Mines-Ponts :**

You have to hand it to the “techno-king”. For all his self-aggrandisement, Elon Musk is serious about technology. Such is the allure of Tesla’s money machine that many now give the benefit of the doubt to Mr Musk’s more eccentric claims. In the future Tesla will be remembered not just as an electric-vehicle (ev) and renewable-energy pioneer, he says, but also as an artificial intelligence (ai) company.

Adam Jonas of *Morgan Stanley*, an investment bank, compares Tesla to Apple to illustrate how Mr Musk could create a money-spinning ecosystem of gadgets and services that reinforce each other.

The maker of evs indeed has more in common with that of iPhones than with car firms. On Wall Street the value ascribed to Tesla’s relatively low-margin ev business is being eclipsed by the promise of potentially more lucrative ones: the sort of connected services, such as maps, entertainment, ride-sharing, semi-autonomous driving and over-the-air upgrades that make Teslas a geek’s dream.

Mr Musk is also doubling down on Tesla’s plan to build a zero-emission energy business. He has said his intention is to produce three terawatt-hours of battery capacity within a decade, more than 12 times as much as Volkswagen, its nearest ev competitor. Besides, the batteries will also go towards Tesla’s home-energy-storage business, a “giant distributed utility” that can cope with increased electricity demand as more people use evs.

Apple, worth more than three times as much as Tesla, is a flattering firm to be compared to. Yet when it comes to geopolitics, Tesla may be at a disadvantage. It is just as global as Apple, but the $2trn global car market is more than four times the size of that of mobile phones. Initially countries like China and Germany welcomed Tesla’s gigafactories, partly to goad local firms into producing better evs. Now that this is happening, the pressure to keep Tesla down is increasing.

If self-driving is the future, concerns about data-gathering and national security are bound to rise. China has already hinted it is sensitive to them, restricting the use of Tesla vehicles by military personnel and employees of state-owned firms because of data-security concerns.

Compared with the problems Tesla is trying to crack, superpower politics are a minor irritation. But although Mr Musk can claim to rule over the realm of physics, politicians and bureaucrats run much of the real world. That is a source of power that even the techno-king cannot disrupt.

Adapted from The Economist | Apr 29th 2021

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**Questions:**

1. According to the columnist, how relevant is the comparison between Tesla and Apple? (80 words +/-10%) Answer the question in your own words.
2. In your opinion, are our driving habits likely to change over the coming decades? Illustrate your answer with pertinent examples.(180 words +/-10%)